

Katja Uusihakala

MEMORY MEANDERS
Place, Home and Commemoration in an
Ex-Rhodesian Diaspora Community

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INTRODUCTION

The problem with Rhodesia¹ is that it does not exist anymore. There is no going back. When we came here in 1980, we decided that there was no return. We would try to integrate here. And even if we couldn't integrate, we would try to find a space to live (...) Rhodesia to us was not necessarily a geographical place. It was an experience within a geographical place. (Jo-Ann)²

Look, one thing we have to admit is, Rhodesia is over. Rhodesia is over. It doesn't exist anymore. It exists in the cyberspace, it exists in our memories, it exists in that we've got friends that *were* Rhodesians, but note, I say *were*. There are no Rhodesians *per se* today. There are Rhodesians that *were*. (Ken)

This is a study about a postcolonial migrant community, white³ former Rhodesians, who have emigrated from Zimbabwe to South Africa after the British colonial rule came to an end, and Zimbabwe gained her independence in 1980. The end of white rule instigated a settler exodus, one of the last of its kind in Africa. An estimated 100 000 whites emigrated from Zimbabwe during the first years of independence, and the majority of them settled temporarily or permanently in South Africa. Throughout Rhodesia's colonial history, the bulk of the white population was always born outside her boundaries; to a significant extent, then, the white Rhodesians were first-generation migrants. After both World Wars, there were surges of white immigration from Britain but most of the whites

¹ The name of the country known today as Zimbabwe was called Rhodesia both in the early years of the colonial period, as well as during the last 15 years of white rule. During most of the colonial period the country was known as Southern Rhodesia, as distinguished from Northern Rhodesia, now Zambia. The use of names is a highly sensitive political issue and sometimes Colonial Zimbabwe is used for the territory prior to independence. Many of the people I worked with, on the other hand, continue to use pre-independence names, such as Rhodesia and Salisbury for Zimbabwe and Harare, even when referring to the present state. Most of them regard themselves as "ex-Rhodesians." For the sake of clarity I will refer to the territory by its colonial name either as Rhodesia or Southern Rhodesia for the period before Zimbabwe's independence in 1980.

² An extract of a recorded conversation with Jo-Ann. Throughout this work I use first name pseudonyms for the ex-Rhodesian people who have been involved in my research in order to preserve their anonymity. Almost all the quotations I present are transcribed from tape-recorded interviews.

³ Although I do not use quotation marks around the adjectives "white" or "black" in this study, this does not mean I regard these notions as "natural" characteristics of human difference, or that I accept such racial terms. They are widely used in Southern Africa to refer to the ancestry of the people in Europe or Africa respectively, but need to be considered as historically and culturally constructed categorizations.

always came from or via South Africa. In the 1970s the white population reached its peak in Rhodesia, but even then they numbered only 250 000 against about six million Africans.⁴

The two quotes above enunciate the ex-Rhodesians' understanding of the finality and closure of Rhodesia subsequent to Zimbabwe's independence and the ensuing emigration of white Rhodesians: Rhodesia is over; it does not exist anymore. At independence Rhodesia as a political entity had expired. When the whites left in numbers Rhodesia became "history": it was sealed off both as a territory and as a way of life in the past. Yet Ken elaborates the ways in which Rhodesia continues to have intrinsic weight in the present lives of former Rhodesians: Rhodesia connects and embraces a network of dense social relationships upheld through communicative channels in the "cyberspace" as well as through active local webs of friendships with others in whose memories Rhodesia continues to matter – with "Rhodesians that were."

The question I ask in this study is how the ex-Rhodesians – in more or less self-initiated exile – envision, create and reminisce about by-gone Rhodesia as "homeland." In spite of Rhodesia's incontestable ending, it is held close by social practices; by thoughts and talks, artifacts and images, and by webs of meaningful relationships. Such social practices connected with processes of remembering together are constitutive of how the community understands itself. My focus is then on the ways in which the colonial past is remembered and reworked and how it affects and effects in the present activities and ideas of the people. The ex-Rhodesians may be considered as forming a community of memory, not in a sense that their memories are solidly the same and unified, but rather, as Paul Connerton (1989) asserts, that they form a social entity with common interests in a common past. In reminiscing about Rhodesia, the people actively invoke past times and places in a social process whereby individual memories recollected evoke the memories of others. Rhodesia, the hub and nexus of the memory narratives and practices, which is reflected upon from the present dispersed diasporic loci, emerges as more than a place or a territory. It is understood as phenomenal experience, a source and site of knowledge and involvement in the past. The ability to remember and the motivation and determination to nurture and cultivate that experience in the past connect the people in diaspora both vertically to the "homeland" and horizontally to the worldwide community of ex-Rhodesians within which one's memories are socially sharable and within which one's memories are socially shaped. As Paul Ricoeur (1991) explains, it is in the transmission of such memory narratives that a cultural community comes to be constituted and by which it narratively interprets itself, and thus belongs together.

The vantage points from which I examine how the ex-Rhodesians reminisce about Rhodesia concern ideas and practices related to place,

⁴ See Appendix 1 for population statistics.

home and commemoration. Reflecting upon the place of belonging and a sense of home, as well as ritually celebrating a common past, all relate to, and are formative of, how the ex-Rhodesians understand themselves and their place in the world. These are fundamental concerns that speak of the experiences of migratory communities in various localities and social circumstances. Today experiences of constructing homes away from home (cf. Clifford 1994, 302) touch diverse communities all over the globe. So do issues of place, landscape and of authority over land. Questions of who has a right to make legitimate claims of belonging to particular territories activate people and motivate political and moral debates the world over. In today's Southern Africa, particularly in the aftermaths of the Truth Commission, controversies of remembering and forgetting are both topical and passionate.

What makes these concerns particular in this study is that the community in question was formerly the colonial elite of Rhodesia. Although the concept "colonial elite" might somewhat inaccurately describe white Rhodesians – a question I will return to later on – we may justifiably say that they did occupy a privileged position in the colonial society. It is from this entitled position that they once experienced and presently remember colonial Rhodesia. The second contextually significant factor structuring the standpoint from which the community reminisces about Rhodesia is the current crisis in Zimbabwe. The whites who have stayed on in Zimbabwe have, until very recently, dominated much of the economy, particularly in the sector of commercial farming, and possessed the most productive land in the country.⁵ However, the political turmoil concerning the redistribution of commercial farmland in Zimbabwe was aggravated notably during the course of my fieldwork in 1999-2000. In 1997 the Zimbabwe government listed about 1500 of the country's 4500 commercial, mainly white-owned, farms for compulsory acquisition. In February 2000 government-backed veterans of the liberation war began to invade commercial farms, which has subsequently led to the forced acquisition of about 95 % of the farmland and generated a new wave of both black and white emigration.⁶ The government seizure of the commercial farms also put Zimbabwe, and particularly the whites, in a momentary

⁵ According to Moyo and Yeros (2005, 171), the white minority, comprising less than three per cent of the population at independence, has commanded almost two-thirds of the national income. Until the year 2000, commercial agriculture accounted for more than 40 % of Zimbabwe's national exports (Foreign and Commonwealth Office 2006).

⁶ It is estimated that between 2000 and 2003 about three million Zimbabweans, out of a total population of slightly above 12 million, have emigrated to the neighboring countries and overseas. South Africa is thought to have received at least two million Zimbabwean immigrants, both professionals and workers. An estimated 300 000 to 500 000 people have immigrated to Britain during that period.

spotlight of international media.⁷ The white emigration, which began with the farm seizures, has diminished the white population in Zimbabwe to about 50 000.⁸ The land invasions resulted in the stagnation of agricultural production, with food production falling by about 60 percent. The situation was made worse by a severe drought with which the Southern African region was grappling. By 2002, Zimbabwe, formerly a major exporter of food, was facing an acute famine, which threatened over six million people, more than half of the population. Concurrently, the political conditions have remained agitated. The government's intimidation and harassment of the political opposition, the judiciary and the press have continued and the annual inflation rate as of March 2007 has reached 1700 percent.⁹

These colonial and postcolonial social and political contexts are where we must situate the ex-Rhodesians in this study. It is pivotal that we understand the historical and social forces that have shaped and structured their lives. It is in such contexts that individual stories are given their meanings. And furthermore, it is such contexts, as argued by Sherry Ortner (1995) and Jean and John Comaroff (e.g., 1992a), that request similar ethnographic inquiry that we accord to ordinary people's stories and their everyday lives in anthropological research. But the significance of historical contextualization notwithstanding, the ethnographic stance I want to accentuate in this study necessitates that we stay close to the lived subjective realities of the people, to their actions, understandings and beliefs, and to their contextual situations on the ground. Thus, although historical forces such as colonialism have shaped and continue to shape the lives of people globally, they are always reflected upon and given meanings in culturally specific ways. My approach to understanding colonial and postcolonial realities therefore builds on knowledge grounded in the lived realities of the people concerned.

As expressed in Jo-Ann's quotation, the meaning of Rhodesia as a place of belonging, as a homeland, might escape strict geographical definitions; homeland is more about a sense of experience grounded in and emanating from place, a shared idea inseparable of the people in that place and a way of life it enabled. In the case of former colonials such a conceptualization of homeland is undoubtedly ambiguous. Although a homeland is never *just* a geographically describable and determinable place, it is still situated

⁷ According to Robin Palmer (1998, 1), in contrast to the normal, almost total lack of coverage of Zimbabwe in the British media, the "land grab" has been discussed in detail, which, Palmer writes, has more to do with race than anything else.

⁸ Estimates of the number of white farmers left in Zimbabwe vary according to the sources, ranging from 250 to 600 farmers (e.g., Reuters 12 February 2006; Blair 2006). After losing their farms, many white ex-farmers have moved to other African countries – mainly Mozambique, Zambia, Malawi, Uganda and Nigeria – and started anew.

⁹ For an analysis of the recent crisis in Zimbabwe, see for example Moyo and Yeros 2005; Sachikonye 2003; Raftopoulos and Phimister 2004; Rutherford 2004.

and localized, in this case significantly within a territory that other people make rightful claims for. While the ex-Rhodesians might have decisively made themselves at home and shared a unifying sense of belonging in Rhodesia, the colonial politics of segregation excluded Africans from their ancestral lands, their “places of belonging.”¹⁰ Thus, “the problem with Rhodesia” is not only that it does not exist anymore, but that even when it existed, its legitimacy as homeland for the whites could be justifiably contested politically and morally. This ambiguity, a double dilemma of sensing a belonging to a place that does not exist anymore, and realizing that the belonging is fraught with disquiet and ambiguity was very rarely explicitly articulated as such. Yet, throbbing, as it were, as a mute presence on the background, this ambiguity seems to call for continuous affirmation and reaffirmation in the ex-Rhodesian self-reflective understanding of belonging.

“When-We-Were-in-Rhodesia” – a Diasporic Mode of Remembering Together

Nostalgic reminiscence and perpetual self-reflection was a major preoccupation in the ex-Rhodesian community. Reflexivity about a sense of belonging to a place as well as to a culturally and historically distinct community seems everywhere to be intensified when people are displaced from what they conceive of as their rightful place of belonging, their homeland. Self-reflective reminiscing in the ex-Rhodesian community perpetuated and attempted to keep unbroken the people’s understanding of the world and of their place in it. In this sense the reminiscing was introspective and closed in on itself; it aimed at telling “us” about “us.” But instead of mere introspection the discourse was partly aimed outwards; it conveyed a desire to be heard and understood by others.¹¹ As in many other diaspora communities, the “we-talk” centered on “upholding the past,”

¹⁰ Donald S. Moore’s (2005) in-depth ethnographic study on the Eastern Highlands of Zimbabwe is an example of colonial politics of displacement and dispossession. He shows how colonial evictions displaced poor farmers from their ancestral lands and subsequently how the postcolonial authorities turned those lands into a resettlement scheme. For comparison, see Anna Bohlin’s (1998, 2001) discussion on how the South African policies of segregation, particularly enforced during the apartheid years, made the experiences of localities and of belonging to places troubled and ambiguous.

¹¹ In her recent dissertation, Yuka Suzuki notes that the constant engagement in self-description also holds true for those whites who have remained in Zimbabwe: “The feeling that they are misunderstood by the outside world is universal, and the desire to present counter-narratives runs deep, and deeper still as they become more vulnerable in the political landscape.” The self-description, she notes, was not only for the benefit of outsiders, but “also to perpetuate and reaffirm their own world, safely protected within a cloak of insularity” (2005).

which seemed to be continuously, even obsessively processed; it was of quintessential social concern. There was a profoundly felt anxiety that once the stories of “us in the past” would no longer be told, “we” would cease to exist. It is this fixation with “us in the past” that has earned the community its notorious name “the *Whenwes*,” used in a somewhat derogative way by white South Africans and self-ironically by the ex-Rhodesians themselves. According to the white South Africans it refers to the Rhodesians’ fatiguing way of comparing every possible situation or subject to how things were done back in Rhodesia; in inaugurating virtually every conversation with a wistful and melancholy opener: “When-we-were-in-Rhodesia...”

“*Whenwe* is actually meant to be a joke, I think,” Charles – a man in his sixties and an active member in the Rhodesian association in South Africa – reflected, “but you don’t want to be a joke, when you’re trying to do something serious.” [I.e., help former Rhodesians to settle in South Africa.] “We tended not to take very happily to that perception that people had of us,” he continued. Charles explained that the Rhodesian Association in South Africa had battled to redress this derogatory image:

We were trying to avoid [that] the Rhodesians would get in a clique, criticize South Africa, criticize South Africans, run down the country and forever keep saying what a fantastic country we had back there. And that, we all believe that anyway, but you don’t go around telling people that! (...) But there are always *Whenwes*, because I’m a *Whenwe* in my own way, but I, I mustn’t try and convince other people that what I had was necessarily a lot better than what I’ve got now. And especially if you do it in such a way as to look back at yourself introspectively and feel sorry for yourself. I think that’s the worst thing you can do. (Charles)

The prevalence of the white South African conceptualization of whining and moaning Rhodesians forever living in the past was revealed to me immediately at my arrival to the field. I had been in South Africa for less than an hour when I heard my first *Whenwe* joke. The white South African joker, himself an emigrant from Kenya,¹² who had come to fetch me from Durban airport, was amused by the subject of my research and posed me a question: “What’s the difference between a jumbo jet and an ex-Rhodesian?” And he replied grinning: “A jumbo jet stops whining when it lands.” This unflattering image of a self-pitying group of people constantly talking about the past was the major reason many former Rhodesians had not wanted to join any Rhodesian associations in South Africa.

But despite the degrading tone of the notion, the discursive prelude *when-we-were-in-Rhodesia* does capture something essential about the

¹² Ironically perhaps, the ex-Rhodesians regarded that the “original *Whenwes*” were the white settlers from Kenya, who moved back to the UK or down south to Rhodesia and South Africa after Kenya’s independence.

way the ex-Rhodesian community understands itself. It suggests a shared mode of remembering and a shared framework of interpretation. It is a past tense mode of cultural self-understanding where the remembered space, the remembered time, and the community of the there and then, as well as that of the here and now, are all co-present in the remembering. The past, in significant ways, is the desired but blocked off future and in that sense it continuously dwells in the present. Used as a self-descriptive noun, *Whenwe* combines a time clause and a first-person plural and fuses them into one another. Announcing "I am a *Whenwe*" emphasizes personal belonging to a community of "us" in the past as well as in the community of "us" in the present, who also have the ability and a will to remember in the same way. Furthermore, in remembering, the moment cannot exist abstractly; when enunciating the moment, the place is synchronically called forth and they too flow into each other. Combining the *when* with the *we* therefore establishes a *social time*, it connotes to the ability to situate oneself together with others in a time past. Thus, in remembering when-we-were-in-Rhodesia the spatial and temporal dimensions of situating oneself merge, and the past time and past place are enlivened and re-entered.

The form of remembering prevalent in the when-we-talk corresponds to a mode of social remembering Edward Casey defines as reminiscing. Unlike more individual and passive reminding or present-oriented recognition, reminiscing consists essentially of making the past live again by evoking it together with others, the memories of one person calling to mind the memories of the other. It is a matter of "actively re-entering the 'no longer living worlds' of that which is irrevocably past" (1987, 107). Reminiscing, Casey asserts, is evoked and sustained by the fact that the company engaged in remembering together possess "certain common or like experiences" (ibid., 114). In remembering together, individual "like" experiences and memories of them are brought into communication with those of others. The sharing of reminiscences is a process whereby individual stories are tied within a chain of others' like stories that build up an understanding of who we are. This we-talk is largely general and open; it is addressed to others, to other "I's" in the "we," who are also part of the Rhodesian diaspora. They comprised – or could have comprised – the "we" in the past. This potential or thinkable "we" is a community of former Rhodesians with which one establishes a subjective sense of belonging. It is a community understood in a sense that it exists not as bounded and essentialist – one does not have to know its members personally – but rather in the minds of the people who sense it and shape its meanings. It is significantly a community of memory, a group constituted by retelling its story, bound together through socially remembering experiences in the past.

Although the when-we-mode of remembering stresses verbal reminiscing about an elapsed period of time in a place that no longer exists, the community also tells its story by non-verbal means. For example, their

houses “look Rhodesian” because “they all have the same things.” An ex-Rhodesian home is a composite of memory-evoking items, objects used in articulating a sense of belonging. Altars of memorabilia composed in diasporic homes operate as visual mnemonic tools that fluently communicate across the ex-Rhodesian society. In addition to memory being embedded in collective representations of material objects, it is largely through embodied practices that memory is non-verbally transmitted. In commemorative practices, such as those related to eating particular foods or ritual re-enactments of significant events, people’s bodily participation ensures the perpetuation of a continuity between then and now, there and here. Such participation makes commemoration particularly emotionally and sentimentally evocative. Hence, I want to elucidate that remembering together is not merely about re-telling our story; it is also about repetition, representing and re-embodiment.

My preference to speak about “remembering together” rather than of “social memory” is meant to emphasize the processual, incomplete and transforming nature of memory, maneuvered – to an extent – by each individual involved. The premise on which my analysis is grounded, however, stresses the always social nature of meanings. Practices of remembering are invariably contextualized and formed in culturally specific frameworks. Hence, Olick and Robbins emphasize: “[M]emory is a matter of how minds work together in society, how their operations are not simply mediated but are structured by social arrangements” (1998, 109). In a classic work on social memory, Maurice Halbwachs (1992, 38) stresses that people acquire, recall, recognize and localize their memories in society. He asserts that “collective memory” links together groups of people who maintain a shared identity. It needs to be emphasized that although I stress the *social* production of memory, I reject the reifying, objectifying tone “collective memory” or “collective identity” reflected in Halbwachs’ notion. My attempt is not to advocate an idea of some kind of a collective mind invisibly determining the shape of individual memory. I believe, however, that the processes of remembering – and forgetting – and the contexts of such processes are always social, in addition to which people think about the world and act upon it in culturally and socially meaningful ways. Individually experienced phenomena are social in the first place, because we are never the sole authors of the notions with which we conceptualize our experiences. Remembering together signifies that memory is about linking and engaging the workings of individual consciousnesses with shared cultural representations. What is pertinent is that the production of shared understandings does not mean that they are significant for the people in the same ways; social understandings build on meaningful differences. Thus, in remembering together people attach their individual experiences to cultural scripts, in the process of which both shape and restructure one another.

What also needs to be stressed is that it should not be presupposed that memory is utterly malleable and available to reconstruction in order to functionally serve the purposes and needs of the present moment. It is significant that the past socially remembered should not be seen as a reserve for making the present understandable or bearable. People may choose to emphasize certain aspects of the past while silencing others. Individuals may carry contradictory versions of the past, highlighting some while suppressing others depending on the present social situation. But despite continuous reinterpretation, the pastness of past is irreconcilable; it cannot as such be unmade. The past, in this sense, seems to be forever escaping the hands occupied in shaping it.

Theorizing Colonialism and Postcolonialism

Rhodesia socially remembered was a colonial society, and colonialism continues to bear immense relevance – albeit ambiguous – and be present in a myriad of ways in the contemporary postcolonial lives of former white Rhodesians. In the following, I will outline how colonialism and postcolonialism have been theorized in recent years, and what the position of settlers has been in these analytical perspectives.

In the early nineties, as I was beginning my undergraduate education in anthropology, colonialism as a topic of anthropological and historical research was resurfacing forcefully. The refreshed approach to colonialism rose from a perceived need to historicize colonialism and to reconsider and dispute earlier theoretical predispositions – both older colonial historiography as well as some tendencies in colonial discourse analysis – in which colonialism, it is claimed, has been considered as an abstract, coherent and monolithic process, and which has underrated the diverse social, material and institutional practices of colonialism in distinct cultural environments (e.g., Jean and John Comaroff 1991, 1992a; Stoler 1989b; Stoler and Cooper 1997; Pels 1997).¹³ The critics disclaimed the implied conception that imperial powers had been duplicating European societies

¹³ It needs to be noted that there has been ethnographically rich and theoretically significant research on colonial encounters prior to the 1990s. Regarding colonialism in Africa, the work done at the Rhodes Livingstone Institute and at the University of Manchester is pivotal (see e.g., Gluckman 1971 and Mitchell 1956). Their approach very much concentrated on the conflicting interests, disharmonies and ruptures within colonial – as well as pre-colonial – African societies, albeit that their analysis conflict was perhaps not considered in the same positive revelatory and revolutionary potentiality that the Comaroffs, for example, stress. Neither does this new approach directly communicate with the kind of historical anthropology Marshall Sahlins has represented. Sahlins' (1985; 1995) concern has been with how the Hawaiians responded to and made sense of early colonial intrusions by encompassing them into, and thereby transforming, their indigenous symbolic structures.

in the colonies and that colonialism has a global and transhistorical logic with which it homogenizes the conquered and exploited spaces (Thomas 1996, 3). What was needed was a more ethnographically nuanced way of exploring colonial encounters, which were seen as fundamentally creating both the colonizer as well as the colonized – albeit in radically different positions of power (Stoler 1989b, 155).¹⁴ In an attempt to criticize the all-pervasive dichotomy between the colonizer and the colonized, the stress has been laid on internal tensions within the categories of the dominant, exploring socially significant distinctions within the colonizer communities, such as class, ethnicity and gender. Thus, instead of analyzing colonialism as the unfolding of a grand imperial narrative, the newer discourse on colonialism purports to examine colonial processes through divergent actions and intentions, in everyday practices and relationships on the ground.

Much as this more recent focus has enriched our understanding of the dynamics in colonial encounters, I have a few reservations. What concerns me in this approach is the continuing absence of real people. Categories on the margins – such as poor whites or women – the focus on which is meant to diversify and even question the category of the dominant, easily become just as solid, homogenous and deterministic as the grander dichotomizations the approach purports to challenge. A focus on structured positions and categories might therefore reduce the full human experience to mere repercussions within such positions. Another deterministic pitfall in this approach is that much of this theorizing continues to grant the colonials subjectivity solely as bearers of power. Prior theories of colonialism are criticized for their rigid view of power seen as solidly grounded in the economic (or military) base. Instead, power is predominately – in the Foucauldian wake – considered to be diffused in social practices in such a way as to transform and re-form subjects. But whether it is blatant exploitation, or hegemonic discourse that frames the limits of what and how things can be said, seen or thought about, power still predominates. Simultaneously, in this discourse, the agency of the colonized seems to be reduced to mere reaction to the “imperial narrative.” In my mind, there is a risk that such dwelling on power might radically reduce the concept of

¹⁴ In this discussion, it was brought to mind that more than half a century ago Bronislaw Malinowski had prompted anthropologists to study colonizers in the same way that the colonized were studied, and had instigated that European colonial interests and intentions were contradictory and incompatible rather than unified (Pels 1997, 166; Stoler 1989b, 134). But for decades Malinowski's suggestion had remained largely unattained by anthropologists. After decolonization in Africa, Stoler attests (*ibid*, 155), a focus on colonialism as a process simultaneously shaping the colonizer as well as the colonized, was a point forwarded by formerly colonized intellectuals – for example Fanon (1986 [1952]) and Memmi (1990 [1957]) – rather than anthropologists.

culture into a reified instrument that people consciously use for their own practical and political benefits.¹⁵

Alongside with a revived concern for colonialism, theories of postcolonialism have become profuse. "Postcolonial" is a queasy term, one that has been so overly theorized in recent years that it risks losing all the descriptive and analytical power it may have had. And as with many other theoretical discourses, it is the rehearsed criticism that seems to occupy the center stage. "Originally" postcolonial theory (alongside with its "predecessor," colonial discourse analysis) was the intellectual field of scholars, whose experiences of the postcolonial condition, it is critically observed, have been located in the metropolises, rather than in the former colonial societies as such. The most forceful arguments in this discourse have been voiced by "diasporic intellectuals as literary critics" (Werbner 1996, 6). The criticism to this discourse is twofold. It is firstly aimed at the detachment of postcoloniality from the actual postcolonies. In such a discourse, Patrick Chabal asserts, the postcolonial condition seems to have graver implications for the definitions of identities in the West than for those who live in the actual postcolonial societies (1996, 37; See also Mbembe 1992, 4). What is needed, therefore, is that the study of postcolonialism (as a moment and as a condition) be located in actual postcolonial places rather than merely discursive spaces.

Secondly, the criticism concerns the periodization of history, namely the placing in time of the postcolonial moment. There is a topical tendency to oppose the idea that the rupture between colonial and postcolonial can be dichotomized, and instead to insist on apprehending colonial continuities in the present, for in many ways, as Williams and Christman argue (1994, 3-4), postcolonialism, although subsequent to colonialism, has not superseded it. Frankenberg and Mani are similarly critical of such dichotomizations. In what ways, they ask, are we situated in a "post" position to colonialism, in what ways is it over and done with, and for whom? Some things in relation to colonialism, they maintain, are over,

¹⁵ My intention is by no means to erase power from colonial relationships, rather I want to draw attention to the determinism, old and new, with which colonials are often studied and to the reductionism such a preoccupation entails. It may, in fact, also be argued that there is too little power in the new analytical approach to colonialism. In drawing attention to the hegemonic aspects in the colonial everyday – the "little practices" of home and dress and hygiene as so forth – it should not be overlooked that colonialism was critically about coercive practices of taking over and possessing land, about unequal access to both material and immaterial resources, and about unequal positions of the colonial subjects as citizens. Thus, accentuating disharmony within the colonizer communities should not conceal the fact that colonized people have had to bear the weight of brute domination. As John Comaroff somewhat self-critically notes, in a sense the niceties of different colonialisms are beside the point for the colonized (1997, 192).

some transformed, but others seem to be reconstructed (1993, 294-5; see also McClintock 1994; Werbner 1996). The paradox then rises from a misleading essentialization of the contrast between the colonial and the postcolonial. This easily leads to ignorance of the dynamics of colonial Africa, which in many ways continue to shape postcolonial African societies (Ranger 1996, 273; 280). In insisting on sensitivity to colonial continuities, there is, of course, a danger of going to the other extreme. Colonialism, when seen as continuity, may become conceptualized as a transhistoric thing, ever-present in one part of the world or another (Ahmad 1995, 9). And, furthermore, as Stoler and Cooper (1997, 33) argue, there is a risk of essentializing the colonial, suggesting that “colonialism was the only thing of importance to people who live in what were once colonies.”

But despite the burgeoning interest and vast literature on cultures of colonialism, as well as the contributing recognition by many scholars of postcolonial Africa that the dynamics of colonialism continue to resonate fundamentally with those of the postcolonial societies, academic silence on present-day former colonials tends to implicate an idea that white history *did* come to an end along with the ceasing of their political power (as was paradoxically expressed in Jo-Ann’s and Ken’s quotes). Consequently, there have been relatively few ethnographic studies that focus on white experience in postcolonial African societies.¹⁶ Vincent Crapanzano’s ethnography (1986) on the whites in South Africa – whatever one might have learned about the conduct of the research later on¹⁷ – is an influential early example. Other anthropologists who have more recently conducted ethnographic research on former colonials include Angela Cheater (1999), whose study focuses on ethnicity and gender in the postcolonial Rhodesian diaspora. Yuka Suzuki’s research (2002; 2005), based on fieldwork in Zimbabwe, is concerned with the intertwined discourses of race and nature that reinforce white cultural worldviews. Blair Rutherford’s (2001; 2004)

¹⁶ I imply here works that build on ethnographic long-term fieldwork. Historical analysis on white colonials as well as research focusing on “white discourse,” particularly regarding South Africa, form fields too broad to be covered here. In passing, it may be noted that there has been considerable absorption in the historical construction – and the malleability – of racial categories and boundaries in the research on colonial cultures (e.g., Stoler 1989a, 1989b, 2002; Young 1995; McClintock 1995), and coincidentally in the social construction of “whiteness” in cultural studies (e.g., Frankenberg 1993, 1997 (ed); Hartigan 1997). For example Steyn (2004) and Nuttall (2001) represent repercussions of this discourse in South Africa. My own work, however, is not about “whiteness” as such.

¹⁷ The book has been controversially received and openly contested by South African anthropologists. Crapanzano has been accused of betraying his informants and the book has made it very difficult for other anthropologists to credibly work in the area. (See critique and discussion by Hugo 1987; Scheper-Hughes 1997; Teppo 2004, 67.)

main concern has been with the commercial farm workers in Zimbabwe, whose lives, however, are fundamentally interrelated with their employers, the postcolonial white “settlers.”¹⁸

My own research, prior to the current study, has been considerably influenced by the colonial and postcolonial discussions I have summarized above. Emphasis on the ambiguities and perplexities of various colonial relationships on the ground also patently dovetailed with my personal experience of postcolonial Africa and my concomitant captivation with colonial history in Africa.¹⁹ Inspired by these emerging trends in anthropology, I ended up returning to Kenya to do fieldwork for my master’s thesis and the subsequent licentiate thesis. In that research (Uusihakala 1995a, 1998, 1999), which was based on ethnographic fieldwork in a small village, located in what in the colonial days were called the White Highlands, I analyzed identity-making processes among a group of ex-colonials.²⁰ I focused on continuities and transformations of colonial institutions, such as the Country Club and a women’s charitable organization, the East Africa Women’s League (Uusihakala 1995b) and the narrative construction of mostly male life-histories (Uusihakala 1996).

The move from Kenya to (Southern) Rhodesia as a field of research was not haphazard. Except for South Africa, where the colonial history is much longer and the white population more fragmented, Kenya and Southern Rhodesia became Britain’s principle settler colonies in Africa, and their colonial pasts are often compared in historical analyses.²¹ Both of

¹⁸ Some others include Bambi Ceuppens’s (1999) work on the Flemish former colonials in the Belgian Congo; Andrea L. Smith’s (2001; 2004) research on “repatriated” whites – the Algerian Pied-noirs of Maltese origin in France; and Janet McIntosh’s (2006) study on how the contemporary white Kenyans understand and interact with “witchcraft” and “magic.”

¹⁹ Because of my father’s work in development cooperation, our family moved to Kenya when I was twelve years old. Those few formative years in Kenya were profoundly influential and channeled my academic interests later on.

²⁰ It is perhaps necessary to note that the expatriate community, of which I had been part, and the white Kenyan community, despite their privileged – albeit dissimilarly that – positions in the society and their common European ancestry, led socially quite distant lives. Based on my personal history in Kenya I knew very little about the *Mzungus* (Kiswahili word for whites that the former colonials use for themselves) in practice.

²¹ Despite their differences, for example in the status of the colonies – Kenya, unlike Rhodesia and South Africa, remained a Crown Colony, thus under a direct control of the Colonial Office in London – both Kenya and Southern Rhodesia possess some unique characteristics that differentiate them from other white enclaves of European empires. Unlike settler colonies such as Argentine and Australia, Kenya and Southern Rhodesia had extensive populations of indigenous peasants at the time of occupation, which meant that economic dependence on indigenous labor became a distinguishing feature of these colonies. A large native population also limited the social composition of the

the colonies have been characterized as strikingly British. This Britishness, it has often been argued, was very self-conscious and pronouncedly aristocratic, irrespective of the actual more meager social background of most of the settlers. As Robin Cohen writes: “exaggerated mannerisms and demonstrations of patriotism often made the British abroad more British than the British at home” (1999, 77; see also Lowry 1997; Hansen 1989). It is significant that the white settler migration to Southern Rhodesia and Kenya occurred within a distinct sphere of emigration from the British Isles. Whereas earlier emigrants from Britain had often been driven off by economic necessity, in the beginning of the twentieth century the emigrants were more from middle and upper class backgrounds. Both the capital required of immigrants, as well as the imperial ethos, the “call of the Empire,” affected the upper middle classes more than any other group in Britain. It was often through “old-boy-networks” – friendships formed at public schools and universities – that the word of opportunity traveled and a certain “empire-awareness” was built (Kennedy 1987, 45, 82; Rich 1989).

These emigrants were adventurers who were seduced by sport and climate and whose status was a matter of occupation, education and birth. Their emigration was motivated partly because their educational or professional skills had a high demand in the new colonies, and partly because their traditional social standing had deteriorated in Britain. Therefore, in contrast to the earlier European emigrants, these emigrant groups have been referred to as “migratory elites” (Kennedy 1987, 6).²² In addition to advertising the colonies to the “right kind” of emigrants, the governments in both countries also actively restricted immigration. They requested that prospective settlers either have assured employment or sufficient amounts of capital in their possession to guarantee that the countries would not face the problem of “poor whites” South Africa was fighting with (Duder 1993, 69; Mosley 1983, 14-15), as this “tramp class” of whites was seen to endanger white prestige in the eyes of the Africans.

white communities. (See for example Maughan-Brown 1982; Mosley 1983; Kennedy 1987; Lowry 1997; White 2004; Hughes 2006.)

²² The concept “migratory elite” promotes an image of a far more homogenous community than was actually the case in either of the colonies, and describes the social composition of Southern Rhodesia’s settler population in particular quite inadequately. However, Kenya always did manage to attract the gentlemanly strand in Britain to a far greater extent than Southern Rhodesia. And although they formed a minority of Kenya’s settler population, it was a powerful, prominent and vocal minority. After both World Wars and consequent soldier settlement schemes in terms of which masses of new settlers arrived to the colonies, the image of Kenya as the “officers’ mess” compared to Southern Rhodesia as the “sergeants’ mess” was strengthened (e.g. Kennedy 1987; Duder 1993; for further discussion see Uusihakala 1995a, 1998 and 1999).

Hence, an ethnographic comparison of the remnants of the two major British settler communities in postcolonial Africa was the original plan I had in mind for my dissertation. My research in Kenya had pushed further my interest in the fragment-like white minorities persistently – and anachronistically – holding on to what they conceive of as their adopted homelands. It had also urged me to understand more deeply the complex and ambiguous meanings of place and home for such colonial migrant communities. And it had not erased my belief that colonial continuities and postcolonial realities need to be studied *in place* through ethnographically grounded fieldwork. Thus, my initial idea was to do fieldwork in Zimbabwe and study the contemporary white senses of land and landscape (in a situation where the land question was beginning to heat up) and compare that to my material from Kenya. But as anthropologists we know that our original plans seldom materialize. The precarious political situation in Zimbabwe compelled me to reconsider whether I could take my family along to the white farms I intended to study, in addition to which bureaucratic processes regarding the research seemed interminable. It was suggested by a few Southern African scholars that I would begin my research with the former Rhodesians in South Africa, perhaps comparing the conceptions and ideas of the ones who stayed on in Zimbabwe and the ones that emigrated after independence. Eventually I ended up staying in South Africa for nine months and visiting Zimbabwe for just over a week. This became a diaspora study.

Diaspora and Homeland

Over the last decade, meanings of the concept of diaspora – originally applied to the classic and paradigmatic cases of Jewish, Armenian and Greek diasporas – have been stretched far and wide to accommodate and cover various movements and dispersals of people in the present era often glossed as the transnational moment. Because the concept is recurrently used somewhat vaguely, it might be useful to present Robin Cohen's annotated list²³ of key characteristics of how diasporas may be defined. According to Cohen, we can speak of a diaspora community, when it fulfills several of the following criteria.

- The people or their ancestors have been dispersed from an original homeland to two or more foreign regions. The dispersal is often accompanied by a memory of a traumatic event that binds the group together. They may also have scattered for aggressive or voluntarist reasons, in search of work, or in pursuit of imperial or colonial expansion.

²³ Cohen's list is based on one produced by Safran (1991), to which Cohen (1999, 23-25) has added some supplementing features.

- They hold a common memory or myth about their homeland, including its location, history and achievements. They idealize the ancestral home, believing that if and when conditions permit, they or their descendants should return.
- They believe they are not fully accepted in their host societies; however, there is a possibility that retaining a diasporic identity is enriching and creative. Time also has to pass before we will know whether a migrant community forms a diaspora group; some merge and intermarry into the host societies.
- They believe that all members of the diaspora should be committed to the maintenance, restoration, safety and prosperity – and even the creation – of the original homeland. They continue to relate in many ways to the homeland and that relationship significantly defines the group's ethnic consciousness and solidarity.
- Members of a diaspora do not only sense a common identity with co-members in the place of settlement, nor only a relationship to the putative or real homeland, but also with co-ethnic members dispersed in other countries.

In the proliferate literature on diaspora, authors stress particular aspects they consider as essential for the diaspora experience. For James Clifford (1994) for example, diasporas are significantly about transnationalism, travel, displacement and reterritorialization. Some authors, such as Paul Basu (2001; 2005), underline the importance of the continuing, reverberant relationship diasporic communities maintain with the homeland, which is also the central constitutive criterion in Safran's (1991) and Cohen's (1999) definitions. In a considerable number of more recent theorizations of diaspora, what is most accentuated is the enduring solidarity that unites the diaspora community in the present host societies and also links them together with members of diaspora residing in different states (Clifford 1994; P. Werbner 2000; Brubaker 2005). Brubaker argues that diaspora should not be seen in substantialist terms as a bounded entity, but rather as an idiom or a stance – a category of practice used in order to make claims, mobilize energies and to appeal to loyalties (2005, 12). This perspective also stresses that not all the people who could be claimed to be members of a particular diaspora, take a diasporic stance; not everyone entitled make diasporic claims. In my analysis I consider the relationship to homeland as essential and formative. The ex-Rhodesians are connected to the homeland ("real" or "imagined") through threads of emotional commitment, sensed and expressed in memory-talk as well as in various memory practices. Secondly the diaspora community is bound together in the host society – as well as with members dispersed in other countries – by upholding a shared idea of the homeland and of common history of dispersal. Thirdly,

the group's active solidarity as well as its distinctive identity in the host society is based on the above commitments.

The concept of homeland is inseparable from people's territorial placements and displacements. The geographical placement is reflected in the idea of return, so pivotal in the "original" concept of diaspora, which very much builds on the dichotomic relationship between the initial, autochthonous homeland and the present place of dwelling. The ex-Rhodesians are a community whose history is marked with multiple moves; convoluted in the imperial expansionism; they or their ancestors have originally migrated to Africa from Europe. Over the course of years in Rhodesia the white settlers often spoke wistfully about their ancestral homelands (England or Scotland or Ireland or Greece or so on), and maintained, in many ways, a diasporic relationship to those places. It would have seemed quite consistent – as was also generally assumed – that after the colony's independence the colonials could and would "return home." However, most white Rhodesians did not "return." Instead – like so many other migrants – they re-migrated. Most of them may have originally come from Britain, and may have maintained an intense sentimental bond towards "Mother England," but, having to leave Zimbabwe, it was not necessarily their first choice for the place of resettlement.

This suggests that not all relationships with homelands materialize in a concrete desire to return. Besides, as is well-known, the idea of *return* to a society once left behind in a misconception, since the "original homeland" will have become something substantially different to what it was in the stories and memories of the forefathers during the years of the migrants' absence (James 1993, ref. Cheater 1999; Runblom 2000, 9-10). It also underlines that England-as-home-talk and the immeasurable ways in which British customs, practices and institutions were made and maintained in the colonies concerned discourses and practices related to the solidarities and sensibilities of the colonizer communities in the colonies. Thus, in real life people's relationships with "original homes" and present places of dwelling are more complicated and much murkier than strict dichotomizations of home and dispersal might allow for. For the dynamics of the ex-Rhodesian diaspora community in the present, the question of concrete return does not appear decisive either. Few imagined that they would actually re-migrate to Zimbabwe in any foreseeable future. Again, much more significant is the shared remembering of homeland, personal relationships and moral gestures within the diaspora itself. As Pnina Werbner argues (2000, 7), such gestures – of philanthropy, political lobbying and personal relations of kinship, marriage, or economic investment – materialize diasporas as "transnational communities of co-responsibility imaginatively grounded in ideas about a shared past/future"; and also in vivid, inventive ways grounded in ideas about shared places of belonging.

In recent years it has become commonplace to state that contemporary movement in the world disconcerts the image of socio-cultural places and

obscures the interconnection with people and places. People, as Rapport and Dawson for example argue, are no longer bound up in essentialized places; they are rather entering and leaving them (1998, 5-6). This age of movement (postcolonial, transnational and so on) is certainly qualitatively and quantitatively different to those preceding it. However, the experience of individuals and communities leaving and arriving, remembering past belongings, relocating and reconstructing homes are not pertinent to this age only. As David Parkin (1998, ix) reminds us, movement within one or two generations rather than fixed settlement has generally characterized human populations. People move, have always moved, either willingly or by force. Thus, experiences of displacements and returns or re-placements are, in many places, the essential features of social life (Siikala 2001).

It is true that the interconnections between people and places are never axiomatic, that people's "rootedness" is never naturally given (cf., Malkki 1997). But in spite of the fact that diverse migrations delineate the ex-Rhodesian community – their immigration into Rhodesia and emigration out of Zimbabwe are constitutive of their understanding of themselves – I want to argue that places have not become irrelevant. Quite the opposite. Cultures may not be fixed in places but from the perspective of those who live them – culture *is* fixed in places. Social knowledge is carved in historically and socially experienced places. Places are rendered meaningful through cultural conceptualization, through social enactments in and with the places. Hence, in my understanding, the present era of large-scale movements has not erased the significance place has for a group's social sense of belonging. When people tackle ever-present existential questions such as who we are, where we come from and where we belong, they very often express themselves through places, and through arborescent metaphors, with which they establish a "culturally constructed natural rootedness to place" (Autio 2001, fn. 7). Speaking of "roots," therefore, implies love, commitment and authority in and over the land in which they wind. Notions of homeland and belonging are imbued with emotions of loss and longing and of homesickness for particular places, however "real" or "imagined" they might be. Thus, when people migrate on large scale, when they inhabit "borderzones" or live in "transnational territories," they remember and speak of places that matter. They speak of homeland.

Place and Landscape

Over the last decade, the concept of landscape has become an established topic in anthropological research (e.g., Hirsch and O'Hanlon (eds.) 1995; Bender (ed.) 1993; Bender and Winer (eds.) 2001). The analysis of landscape, expressed in these edited volumes, generally departs from what is conceived of as the conventional "Western" notion of landscape, as something we see or a setting that frames anthropological representations (Hirsch 1995, 1-2). Hirsch suggests that the ordinary, everyday social life

should be considered as a foreground experience, whereas the imagined and ideal is the background, the potentiality of the way we might be. His argument is that landscape is a relationship between these two poles of experience. Landscape, as a relationship, should thus be seen as a cultural process realized in different ways in different historical and cultural contexts (ibid, 4-5; 22). According to Barbara Bender, landscape should be considered as the way in which people understand and engage with the material world around them; in her view “landscapes are always in process, potentially conflicted, untidy and uneasy” (2001, 3). I agree that landscape should not be seen as a static background stage where things happen, as something utterly outside humanity. Neither, I feel, should landscape be considered as a mental image, a ready-made representation pinned onto the waiting ground. The problem with the above perspectives is that although the authors maintain that landscape is a cultural process rather than an image, view or a vista, the dichotomization of background and foreground in Hirsch’s analysis, or material and meaningful in that of Bender, tend to underline such a view and distance the very landscape at stake. In my understanding, if we take seriously the examining of landscape as a cultural process, the material and meaningful have to be seen as synchronous and inseparable. I thus consider landscape to be a field of historically situated and layered cultural practices, of memories and engagements – simultaneously symbolic and material in nature – of particular people with their particular environments and milieus.

In order to capture what the cultural processes of landscape might be about, in order to examine the particular ways of engagement, of sensing and making sense, of feeling and knowing places, I have turned to phenomenological approaches to understanding places and landscapes. For Tim Ingold, landscape is “neither a picture in the imagination, nor is it a formless substrate on which human order is imposed” (1993, 154.) Instead, he proposes that we take a dwelling perspective to the understanding of landscape. Heidegger’s concept of dwelling (1975), central to Ingold’s understanding, emphasizes knowledge gained from and grounded in the everyday involvement in the world. (See also Tilley 1996; Gray 1999.) Landscape is always about remembering predecessors, whose activities and practices have participated in forming it. In Ingold’s analysis, the relationship of place and landscape is such that a place in the landscape is not cut out from the whole; rather, each place embodies the whole at a particular nexus within it, which makes each place particular. The character of the place is grounded in the experiences it affords to those who live there, on the activities the inhabitants engage in. In short, Ingold defines landscape as “the world as it is known to those who dwell therein, who inhabit its places and journey along the paths connecting them” (1993, 156).

In conceptualizing place, Steven Feld and Keith Basso also approach the experience through being-in-the-world. Rather than being satisfied

with the relatively vague statements that places are culturally constructed or processed, they examine distinctive and localized ways in which such processes work. In taking sensual experience, local knowledge and local ways of expression seriously, they explore “the relation of sensation and emplacement; the experiential and expressive ways places are known, imagined, yearned for, held, remembered, voiced, lived, contested and struggled over; and the multiple ways places are metonymically and metaphorically tied to identities” (1996, 11). This is an argument for the emplacements of cultural practices, as well as for the significance places have for identity processes. It is also an argument for sensual, embodied experiencing and knowing about places.

However, even if we agree that local knowledge and knowledge of locality are produced through physical, sensual experiencing of places, we can only ever approach the sensation of others through their representations, verbal or non-verbal. Furthermore, my material does not consist of observations of people’s embodied engagement with the places they speak about and long for. It consists of *memories* of such engagements, of narratives of places recounted at a distance in time and space. Thus, although landscapes are experienced and unfold through the gradual movement of bodies in their midst, in remembering them from afar the levels of knowledge and engagement are transformed. When the landscape cannot be dwelled in except in memory, its representations often approach a canonical series of snapshots. In addition to telling stories of emotionally meaningful, sententious homeplaces, people often reminisce about particular iconic sites. Such places gather more cultural gravity than others in the diasporic construction of homeland. Their meanings are amplified in processes of heroic landscaping – through an ongoing narrative about genealogical rootedness to the soil of courageous, almost mythical, forbearers. I will argue that both homeplaces and iconic landscapes – and their stories – operate in diaspora as mnemonic devices to recall a shared history and to act as moral guides (Kahn 1996, 194). In constructing paths through landscapes, both metaphorically and concretely, the ex-Rhodesians are mapping a shared terrain and holding Rhodesia as home.

On the Field and on Fieldwork

When I started planning my fieldwork, I contacted the Rhodesian Association of South Africa (RASA). They took an immediate interest and started circulating my letter of introduction through the association’s newsletter. It was suggested that I would base myself in Pietermaritzburg, since, in the words of the association’s national secretary, “there are lots of Rhodesians in and around Pietermaritzburg; they have an active RASA committee and a family-atmosphere.”²⁴ I followed his suggestion and

²⁴ In addition to Pietermaritzburg, there were four other branches in the association. During my fieldwork I participated in the social functions of four of the branches.

spent most of the nine months of my fieldwork (1999-2000 and 2002) in Pietermaritzburg. The town is situated about 80 kilometers inland from Durban (a major port and a coastal resort town), and it is the administrative capital of the province KwaZulu-Natal.²⁵ The British influence in Pietermaritzburg is very prominent; the town looks distinctly British colonial and is renowned for its Victorian and Edwardian architecture. Although Maritzburg (as the town is locally known) may in advertising material be regarded as a “dynamic commercial, educational and industrial centre” (<http://www.pietermaritzburg.co.za>), it is nicknamed “Sleepy Hollow” for a reason: it is not exactly a hub of social life. This popular name reflects both the location of the town in a hollow surrounded by forested escarpment and fertile hills of the Natal Midlands, and the unhurried atmosphere of a country town. According to one estimate, there are about 20 000 ex-Rhodesians in and around Maritzburg, and one did run into people with a Rhodesian family background on daily basis.²⁶ The connections between Natal and Rhodesia have a long history, beginning with Rhodesia’s “founding father” Cecil Rhodes, who settled in Natal when he first arrived to South Africa. A lot of the administrative personnel as well as other settlers to Southern Rhodesia had come from Natal. These family connections were maintained during the colonial era as the Rhodesians commonly traveled down south to the Durban beachfront for holidays and sent their children to be educated in colleges in Natal.

The Rhodesian Association became my stepping stone into the ex-Rhodesian community. I was very quickly “adopted” by Graham and Susan, the chairman and secretary of the local branch of the Rhodesian association.

²⁵ According to the 1991 census, Pietermaritzburg has a population of slightly less than 230 000, but the population today is estimated to be between 350 000 and 500 000. The town was founded in 1838 by the Boer Voortrekkers at a site, which the Zulu called uMgungundlovu (the place of the elephant, i.e. the king). The Boers named their new capital after two of their leaders Pieter Retief and Gert Maritz. Six years later, the British took over the control of Natal and turned Pietermaritzburg into a military garrison town.

²⁶ The exact number of ex-Rhodesians in South Africa as a whole is not easy to determine. According to an early estimate, approximately 40 000 of the white emigrants settled in South Africa in the early 1980s (Simon 1988, 53). My impression is that at present the number of white migrants from Zimbabwe is much higher than this. In the 1991 Census in South Africa, out of the total white population, 27 343 were citizens of Zimbabwe. However, very few ex-Rhodesians retained their Zimbabwean citizenship after migration, but become South African citizens or maintained a pre-existing British citizenship. The same census shows that there were 91 228 whites in South Africa who were born in Zimbabwe (*Republic of South Africa*, Population Census 1991). Another calculation, which falls between the above numbers, comes from the Rhodesian Association of South Africa. According to their statistics, over 74 000 Rhodesians settled in South Africa between 1980 and 1987 (Rhodesians Worldwide 1987 3(1): 9). See Appendix 1 for more population statistics.

Although as a family²⁷ we did not live with them, they in a significant sense became a host family: we communicated with and visited them daily; we spent almost all our weekends and public holidays with them; and they took care of much of the practical organization of our settling in, including vital social relationships – most often through people with some kind of a Rhodesian connection – and most importantly, they became my friends, whose compassion and reassurance I could rely on.²⁸ During my first week in South Africa, Graham took me to my first RASA branch meeting, where I was introduced to the other committee members. The first meeting was also my introduction to the branch's functions and activities – such as monthly *braais* (South African barbeques), fund raisings, social nights and so on – that would punctuate my weekly schedule. The Maritzburg branch committee members soon became my first and closest guides to the community, who further introduced me to their ex-Rhodesian friends and relatives and colleagues, which gradually broadened the circle of the people I worked with.

The members of RASA are largely elderly; three quarters of the nation-wide community, and half of the people I worked with, relied on pensions.²⁹ Most of them can be broadly categorized as representing the middle class in colonial Rhodesia. The people I worked with had occupied a broad spectrum of occupational positions in Rhodesia. Some had worked on the railways, in the police, in the customs, in the army; others as engineers, teachers and nurses, and there were a few who had been in relatively high administrative positions. In addition, there were a couple of farmers, some entrepreneurs, and a few mechanics and miners.³⁰ Those who had been young enough when they emigrated had often managed to

²⁷ My spouse and small daughter joined me in South Africa after an initial month of practical settling in.

²⁸ Since my return to Finland, the family has kept me in touch with local affairs by e-mail almost daily. In 2002, I returned to South Africa first and foremost to participate in a wedding in the family.

²⁹ RASA can thus rightfully be called a pensioners' association, with almost 80 % of its members being over the age of 60. It follows that three quarters of the members are retired and a majority of ex-Rhodesians depend on pensions. The national survey shows that two-thirds of the members are entitled to a pension from Zimbabwe, and almost one-third receive a South-African pension. One sixth is entitled to a pension from elsewhere, the majority of those from the UK. Those relying on the Zimbabwean pensions have been hard hit by the economic turmoil in Zimbabwe. No NRZ (National Railways) pensions have been remitted since January 2001 and no Zimbabwe Government pensions since March 2003. The RASA survey concludes that 15 % of its members are living on the breadline.

³⁰ According to one RASA survey, the professional status of Rhodesians, who had settled in South Africa between 1980 and 1987, 26 390 people out of a total of 74 000 were working. Of them 26, 4 % were professional people; 10, 5 % administrators/managers; 26, 4 % clerical personnel; 8, 9 % sales personnel;

land into similar positions they had held in Rhodesia. However, the ones who had been in their fifties or older, had sometimes had to battle to find jobs. The people who still worked and pensioners alike were in general very involved in community matters and quite busy in their day-to-day lives. In addition to participating in the Rhodesian association, many took part in war veteran organizations and were active members in their diverse congregations. The pensioners regularly played cards or chess or bowls with their friends; they had their gardening, their Bible studies and book clubs, walking societies, succulent clubs and life-history societies to attend to – many of them activities in which I took part.

The general enthusiasm with which I was greeted in my first RASA meeting reflected how I was received in the broader ex-Rhodesian community later on. There was a tangible passion to be heard, an idea of a heritage that should be preserved and a story that should be told of a “nation spread around the world”; and it was to be my duty to capture and collect all that. It was assumed that my fieldwork would consist of interviewing as many people as possible – generally the older the better, since they would have “the longest history.” I dutifully obliged, and conducted recorded conversations with 53 people altogether.³¹ I am rather reluctant to use the term “interview” for these conversations, since I did not have a ready-made list of questions for which I was collecting answers; instead I aimed to follow up on themes that would recurrently emerge in the discussions. Generally the conversations broadly covered family histories. The themes that invariably came up included family background, arrival to Rhodesia, everyday life in Rhodesia (jobs, places of dwelling, moves, houses, family events), war and politics, leaving Zimbabwe, and settling in South Africa. Usually the conversations also included a reflexive self-analysis – an understanding of one’s life from the contemporary viewpoint, making sense of loss and belonging in one’s life. With some of the people we constructed genealogies together; they worked both in mapping out webs of relationships in diaspora, as well as accelerating all kinds of family legends. Some of these “interviews” were prearranged for me and conducted with people with whom I had no previous or subsequent contact, and although those situation were sometimes rather clumsy and awkward, I tried to accommodate in order to accord to the people’s generally held idea of what comprised significant knowledge to be accumulated and compiled.

In addition to the recorded conversations, I have relied on diverse sources of material in this dissertation. The most substantial source of printed material was the RASA library in Pretoria, which I visited

1, 4 % community service personnel; 2, 8 % agricultural personnel; and 31 % production personnel (Rhodesians Worldwide 1987 3 (1):9).

³¹ Half of the discussions involved married couples; and just over a half of the people lived in and around Pietermaritzburg. Most of the people were interviewed more than once, some as many as five times. Altogether, the recorded conversations comprise 112 hours of talk, which I have transcribed.

twice. The library houses a significant collection of books on Rhodesian history, society and culture, popular fiction, coffee table books, war books, poetry and so forth. They also hold an archive of papers, newsletters and correspondence of the association. The association has regularly conducted surveys on their members in South Africa, and I had access to these results as well. In Pretoria, I also visited the National Archives to gather material about issues related to migration between South Africa and Rhodesia/Zimbabwe. At Central Statistical Office I collected South African censuses connected to the emigration to and immigration from Zimbabwe. I also worked shortly at the National library of South Africa in Cape Town, and the University libraries of Stellenbosch and Pietermaritzburg. In addition to printed material, I have also followed closely the numerous ex-Rhodesian sites on the Internet. These sites form a substantial source of material, complementary in a way, since also people who do not regularly participate in ex-Rhodesian diaspora associations follow, read and contribute to these contact and memory sites. The recurrent themes in stories, anecdotes and reminiscences on the sites (as well as in the printed publications such as the journal *Rhodesians Worldwide*) concern pioneer history, life-histories of particular individuals, recollections of emigration and difficulties of settling, re-visits to Zimbabwe, and the current political and economic situation in Zimbabwe.

In my field diaries I have recorded quotidian fragmented conversations – anecdotes, stories and histories told around kitchen tables or during walks in gardens, chats and jokes and gossip at *braais*, in bars and cars. I have traced social networks and daily affairs of the people I associated with and written down detailed descriptions of the social functions I attended, as well as portrayals and floor plans of houses I visited. I paid particular attention to – and photographed – the “Rhodesian representations” in people’s homes. I also took notes on personal books, diaries, photo albums, autobiographies, music and videos that people suggested contained some significant information. But throughout my fieldwork the material I inscribed in my field diaries was not considered as valid or as important as were the ever mounting piles of tapes of recorded interviews.

The public sentiment about relevant information and the proper way of “collecting history” has a broader meaning. It tells about how the people perceived themselves, and importantly, how they wanted others, outsiders, to perceive them. Although an anthropologist is always faced with issues related to how he or she is situated in the context of the field, and furthermore, how these positions affect what is considered worthy or not worthy enough to be told him or her, these questions may become all the more acute when dealing with a group of people in a privileged position, people whose lifestyle in many ways seemed to request continuous negotiation and affirmation for its legitimation. I continue to believe that the study of people in dominant positions necessitates similar ethnographic thickness with which we pursue the study of “other cultures”

(Hartigan 1997). Thus, if we take seriously the call that colonizers should be studied the way the colonized have been, it means that we have to see them as thoroughly “cultured” (and concomitantly as human) as any other groups of people we study. But this is not necessarily as simple as the similarly privileged position (in terms of race and class) of the researcher and the researched might suggest. I shared in many ways a similar cultural background to that of the people I interacted with. The basic education we had received was similar, many of their cultural customs as well as religious practices and beliefs were not alien to me, we ate similar food, dressed similarly, had read the same books and seen the same movies. But the ease of communication had a sharp edge to it, for despite the ostensible sameness, and the consequent illusion of shared meanings it raised, the lives of these people, and their understanding of them, were very different from mine. What we seemingly shared made sense in significantly different ways.

At the time when my fieldwork period was turning to a close, the dramatic worsening of the political situation in Zimbabwe and the concomitant onslaught of farm invasions – and especially the almost fanatical intensity with which the ex-Rhodesians followed the situation – crystallized the ambiguous and discordant position I had held throughout my fieldwork. In the face of deeply real, tormenting distress and agony in Zimbabwe, my research seemed harrowingly trivialized; it brought forth doubts I had time and again pushed aside, and I had my misgivings about the relevance and value of a study of ex-colonials and their colonial memories. Although most people had received me with genuine open-mindedness and self-reflexivity that assumed and accepted that my views would differ from theirs, there had been a few instances over the course of my fieldwork when I was directly confronted and questioned whether I was one of those “bloody pink-o liberals”; whether I was interested “in the truth” or in my own political sensibilities. I often had smiled it off, declining to say anything (which irritated me greatly). At times I was deeply frustrated and offended, but did not quite know how to respond. It wasn’t until the end of my fieldwork in the context of the political upheaval in Zimbabwe, that I felt confident (and antagonized) enough to express political opinions rather different from those of the majority of the people I worked with.

However, in my writing and analysis I have not wanted to take a tone of patronizing contemptuous dismissal. Neither have I felt any need to “speak for” the people, both of them dispositions or sensibilities that I personally find annoying in ethnographies. This does not mean that anthropologists could, or even should, claim some sort of “objectivity,” which is always illusory. It is self-evident that the knowledge gained through participant observation is inseparable from the knower. The anthropologist uses herself as an instrument of knowing to understand the life of another. Thus, involved as tools of their research, anthropologists in the field are always

subjectively positioned and those positions significantly affect the research. Ethnographic fieldwork is always the co-product of the anthropologist's attempts to learn and the people's endeavors to educate the anthropologist. The account that follows is a product of such a process, the balancing and tuning of which is, in the end, that of the researcher.

Outline of the Dissertation

The structure of the thesis is as follows. Part I operates as a historical contextualization of the ex-Rhodesian community and as an opening to the sections that follow. Since this work does not aim at the construction of a historical account of a certain people or a period of time through historiographic methods, I trace the colonial history of Rhodesia very briefly, concentrating on the arrival of the pioneers and the leaving of the white Rhodesians at independence, events and eras that operate at the nucleus of the community's shared interpretations of their history.

In Part II, I focus on the processes of symbolic investment that go into understanding place and landscape in Rhodesia (and Zimbabwe) and ask how the once dwelled-in places, iconic landscapes and experiences within places are reminisced about from a spatial and temporal distance. In Part III, I examine how home – both as a tangible and mundanely organized sphere of everyday lives and as an idea of belonging – is culturally configured, and analyze how and if homes travel in diaspora. The final ethnographic section concentrates on commemorative practices. By focusing on two memory practices – firstly the organization of food events by the Rhodesian Association in South Africa and secondly, the celebration of a centenary of Rhodesia in 1990 – I analyze how the diaspora community is constituted, reproduced and transformed by processes of remembering together, through shared social events and through stories the people tell about themselves.

PART I

HISTORICAL CONTEXTUALIZATION OF THE EX-RHODESIAN COMMUNITY

1. CONQUEST, COMPANY RULE AND SELF-GOVERNMENT

The history of colonial Rhodesia may be roughly divided into four eras: the British South Africa Company rule (1890-1923); the period of the Responsible Government (1923-1953); the time of the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland (1953-1963); and the UDI-period between 1965 and 1980. In my account, I will focus mostly on the founding of the colony and on the events – and the experiencing and interpreting of those events – that led to the “end of Rhodesia.” It is evident that certain eras and episodes always stand out in people’s history as turning points, points of transformation and of deep significance. These two periods of time, the beginning and the end, are constantly and actively talked about and understood as constitutive of the diaspora community. In the ethnographic sections that follow, I will return to the ways these eras and events are in multifaceted ways socially remembered.

“Founding” Rhodesia: The British South Africa Company Rule (1890-1923)

The discovery of gold in Transvaal’s Witwatersrand in 1886 intensified the long-circulating legend that the riches of Ophir lay between the rivers Limpopo and Zambezi, in the landlocked territory, which today forms Zimbabwe. Cecil John Rhodes, a British-born South African business magnate and politician, was anxious to expand British control – both political and economic – over the Southern African region, and not let the Boers have sole possession of the region’s mineral wealth.¹ In 1888, Charles Rudd, on behalf of his business partner Rhodes, obtained a concession for mineral rights in the Mashonaland territory from Lobengula, the Ndebele king.

The major African groups in the territory at the time of the occupation were the Mashona (various Shona-speaking groups) and the Ndebele. The ancestors of the Mashona had arrived to the region around A.D. 1000. They were an iron-working and food producing Bantu group who had migrated from the north. They constituted politically centralized societies, established gold and ivory trade, and commenced a stone-building

¹ The Transvaal had been colonized by Boer settlers who had trekked there from the British dominated Cape Colony in the 1830’s and 1840’s.

tradition, the most important landmark of which is the complex of Great Zimbabwe, built in the 13th and 14th centuries, from which the nation of Zimbabwe took its name (Rubert and Rasmussen 2001, 1; Wills 1985, 16-18; Pikirayi 2001). The Ndebele were more recent immigrants to the area. They were a Nguni group who had migrated up north from South Africa in the 1830's as a result of *mfecane*, a period of disturbances and mass migrations in South Africa, caused by the expansion of the Zulu state under King Shaka. Although they were much less numerous than the politically fragmented Shona groups in the region, the Ndebele dominated the territory's politics and trade at the stage of the occupation. Rhodes, along with early European missionaries, travelers and concession seekers, saw the Ndebele as highly militaristic and understood that they ruled both Matabeleland and Mashonaland.² This conviction – not repudiated by the Ndebele king Lobengula – assured the British South Africa Company (BSAC) that the Rudd concession gave them the right to occupy Mashonaland, where their primary mining interests lay. In the meanwhile, Britain was trying to keep pace in the scramble for Africa. The principle of a Chartered Company appealed to Britain, since the Company would carry the administrative costs of running the colony. Thus, on October 29, 1889 the BSAC, with Rhodes as its director, was granted a Royal Charter by Queen Victoria allowing the Company to “make treaties, promulgate laws, preserve the peace, maintain a police force, and acquire new concessions” (Wills 1985, 139).

Exaggerated descriptions of bountiful goldfields persuaded prospectors, and in 1890 Rhodes' pioneer column set northwards into Mashonaland in search of the “Second Rand.” The pioneer column comprised of a paramilitary Police Force of about 500 and the Pioneer Corps of about 200 civilians – who were given military ranks – selected from 2000 applicants in South Africa for their ability to ride and shoot as well as for their technical and professional skills (Martin and Johnson 1981, 35; Gale 1970, 7). By and large the Corps men were young and single, motivated by the adventure and opportunity of a new frontier. The Corps included doctors, lawyers and stockbrokers as well as miners and farmers, butchers and builders; many of them were sons of noted Cape families. Rhodes' idea, reflected in the composition of the Pioneer Corps, was thus to establish the nucleus of a self-contained civil community (Gann 1965).

The column was heavily armed with rifles and revolvers, “two Gatling machine guns, a Gardner and a Maxim” (Encyclopaedia Rhodesiana 1973, 281), in anticipation of attack by the Ndebele. The column assembled at Fort Macloutsie in eastern Bechuanaland (Botswana), and set off for

² Terence Ranger discusses how the early colonial administrators (who were often recruited from Natal in South Africa) “expected ‘the Ndebele’ to be like the colonial image of ‘the Zulu,’ and salaried Ndebele chiefs (...) were only too ready to accept such a glamorous and authoritarian identity” (1993, 83).

a 500-mile trek towards Mount Hampden (Fort Salisbury/Harare) in Mashonaland. The aim was to build a road through the territory and to begin the construction of settlements along the route preparing the ground for succeeding settlers. Hence, the column built forts at Tuli, Victoria, Charter and finally at Salisbury, where they arrived on September 12, 1890. The Union Jack was raised the following day and the pioneer column, in the name of Queen Victoria, took possession of Mashonaland "and of all other unpossessed land in South-Central Africa which it might be found desirable to add to the Empire" (Gale 1970, 7). At arrival at their destination in Salisbury, each member of the Police Force was rewarded with a 4500 acre (1640 hectare) farm, and the troopers received 3000 acre (1210 hectare) farms and 15 gold claims each.³

The prospectors soon discovered the poverty of local goldfields. The shares of the company began to fall and the trekkers started returning to South Africa. According to Dane Kennedy (1987, 18), only 26 (14 %) of the Pioneer corpsmen settled permanently, whereas 51% of the men left the Colony during the first decade. The company then turned its attention towards occupying Matabeleland, which it did after conquering an uprising by the Ndebele. The consequences of the war for the future land problems were great. The Europeans in the Colony were under legal obligation to fight for the Company, but some refused to do so. An agreement was reached granting everyone taking arms mineral concessions and a share of the Ndebele cattle, in addition to a free farm of 3000 *morgen* (6350) acres anywhere in Matabeleland (Palmer 1977a, 226). As Palmer writes (1977b, 29) "South African frontier traditions had reached Bulawayo."⁴

In the meantime, The Company's administrator, Leander Jameson, was determined to invade the Transvaal in order to overthrow the Kruger government and to re-establish British supremacy in the region. This raid was a political fiasco, but by vacating the territory of the BSAC Police Force, it gave the Ndebele and the Shona the opportunity to express their resentment of the Company rule and rise in an armed struggle, the first *Chimurenga*, in 1896-1897.⁵ The end of the Risings resulted in the

³ In the Southern African frontier, land was thus used as a substitute for money. Comparing Southern African and American frontier traditions, Thomson and Lamar (1981b, 29) note that both the British government and later the American government paid citizens for military duty with land warrants, and by a series of national land acts offered virtually free lands to promote settlement.

⁴ In 1654 first land grants were made to settlers near Cape Town. Subsequently, the further north the settlement expanded, the larger the farms grew. It became customary that a man could possess all the land within half-an-hour's ride from his house in the center, which was 3000 *morgen* (6350 acres). The concepts farm and 3000 *morgen* became synonymous.

⁵ Rhodes negotiated peace with the Ndebele *indunas* at the Matopos hills. No peace treaty was signed with the Shona. Instead, Shona chiefs were hunted down and some were executed. Death sentence was also imposed on rebellious

reorganization of the administration of the Colony. The Company had to accept more imperial oversight, and the British government appointed a Resident Commissioner. In 1898 European settlers were given voice in the Legislative council, which comprised the Administrator, the Resident Commissioner, five Company nominees and four elected settler members (Palmer 1977b, 60).

Until the First World War, Rhodesian settler society was still very much a "frontier." The BSAC encouraged land occupation by companies, not individuals, in order to prevent undercapitalized settlers (Mosley 1983, 14; Phimister 1988, 58). And although much of the "conquest land" was alienated only on paper, at the end of the first decade since the territory's occupation, one-sixth (more than 15 million acres) of the entire territory was in the hands of Europeans, mostly of "development" companies. Land was thus regarded as a speculative asset, the value of which would rise when the territory became more established (Palmer 1977b, 39). At that stage, however, most European farming was subsistence cultivation and most "farmers" were primarily transport riders, storekeepers or traders, who traded the food from their African neighbors (Phimister, 1988, 262; Palmer 1977a, 228). As the BSAC realized that the mineral deposits found were relatively modest, it began to turn its energies to the promotion of settler agriculture, and after the First World War, the white Rhodesian society began to stabilize. Settlers started increasingly to bring wives and children out to the colony. This re-prioritization of economy, with an emphasis on a more settled and permanent white population, in a way closed off the frontier period. According to B. M. Schutz (1973, cit. Phimister 1988, 100), "In one generation Rhodesian settler society had changed from a temporary miners' frontier to a family-oriented farming and trading society (...) from an imperial appendage to an established social structure."

During the British South Africa Company period, Rhodesia was very closely bound to South Africa. In addition to producing most of the settler immigrants, South Africa also supplied the bulk of the administrative ideas and much of the personnel, as well as the legal system. After the First World War, the BSAC, supported by local and South African business interests as well as the South African government, pressed for Rhodesia's amalgamation into the Union of South Africa. However, in a referendum held in 1922 the almost exclusively white Rhodesian electorate voted against the Union and for a "Responsible Government."⁶

Mhondoro spirit mediums Nehanda and Kaguvi. This rendered the *Mhondoro* significant symbols during the second *Chimurenga*, the war for Zimbabwe's independence. Their symbolic importance was further enhanced, because the *Mhondoro* are seen as providers of rain and fertility, thus making them the true owners of the land (Ranger 1979, 1985; Lan 1989, Spierenburg 2005).

⁶ In later years the campaign for self-government was presented in heroic terms to generations of Rhodesians. For example, W. D. Gale, in his very patriotic

Responsible Government (1923- 1953)

In 1923 the BSAC turned over responsibility of Southern Rhodesia to the British imperial government and Southern Rhodesia gained a self-governing status; the colony had a restricted but formally nonracial franchise, an all-white Legislative Assembly, civil service, armed force and police. Although Britain officially maintained the right to intervene, particularly in matters which affected the Africans, in practice the Imperial Governor had much less power than in more orthodox colonies. That Southern Rhodesia was a settler colony, rather than a protectorate, distinguished it from the British-dominated neighbors. The local white community was large enough to override and modify imperial ideologies to its own advantage (Summers 1994, 8). By the 1930's Southern Rhodesia had become dominated by lower middle class settlers, skilled artisans, small farmers and small miners, and a considerable number of whites were semi-skilled workers employed, for example, by mines and railroads. These classes were vulnerable to economic depression and feared competition from Afrikaners, Asians and Africans (Lowry 1997, 266). The state responded to depression by aggressively defending the interests of the whites, and the racial segregation of land – institutionalized in the 1930 Land Apportionment Act – became the cornerstone of the Responsible Government's politics.⁷ The Land Apportionment Act was more intensely and effectively enforced following the post-Second World War settler boom, when large numbers of new settlers arrived from Britain on various Ex-Servicemen's settlement schemes. Many of the servicemen, who had served in the Royal Air Force, were de-mobbed in Rhodesia. Walt, a very verbal elderly man whose stories were always painstakingly detailed, explained:

I joined [the Royal Air Force] in early -45 and they sent me to Rhodesia in -45 (...) I came by sea on the east coast, we came

account of Rhodesian history published in 1970, writes that the union with South Africa seemed inevitable: "All the material advantages lay with South Africa – wider markets, more aid for the farmers, greater expenditure on development (...) But the majority of Rhodesians, sturdily self-reliant, decided to stand on their own feet. They settled the issue in a referendum on October 27, 1922, by voting in favour of self-government" (Gale 1970, 17).

⁷ By that stage, European agriculture had established itself as a central sector of Southern Rhodesian economy, and the members of the farming community held strategic positions in the colony's government (Palmer 1977b, 137). The settler farmers were the most powerful group demanding segregation of land. In the Land Apportionment Act, the land was divided into European reserve of 49 million acres (all urban land was European); the Native Reserves of 29 million acres; Native Purchase areas (next to native reserves) of 7,4 million acres; and unassigned areas comprising of 17,7 million acres (Mosley 1983, 24). In the decades that followed, the Land Apportionment Act became a *magna carta* for the settlers and a source of intensifying grievance to the Africans.

through the Suez canal, down the east coast to Durban and then they had the troop train from Durban up to Bulawayo (...) And then we had a camp just outside Bulawayo called Heany, 15 miles from Bulawayo. And I was in charge of the Air Force police there (...) Then in 1948 I was due for de-mob, de-mob group 69. And we were told, all of us were told, or it was suggested, that we take a local de-mob in Rhodesia. For two reasons. One is, things were very bad in Britain because nobody had thought in England as to what was gonna happen to all the people, all the men who had been fighting. But then when I was due for de-mob the British government through the Air Force authorities said: "We'll give you a nice suit, outfit, and if you can get a job and accommodation, you can stay here and you're gonna be far better off than if you go back to England where there's no work, and so much unemployment." And, so it was put to us that there's a great shortage of whites in Rhodesia. (Walt)

At that stage, emigration from South Africa intensified as well. Some were pulled by the burgeoning economy and by the availability of cheap land; others pushed by the coming to power of the Afrikaner-supported National Party in 1948. Many of the British South Africans – or those who considered themselves as more liberal – felt that their opportunities of advancement under the new government were becoming severely limited. Frans was one of them.

These were turbulent times in South Africa. The United Party Government was seriously challenged by the National Party. Like most foreigners I was liberally inclined, believing black to have been beautiful. I was stupid enough to have written a letter to the Rand Daily Mail, published, advocating that the school feeding system ought to be extended to black schools, where it was not. This led to my being called to the principal's office to be admonished. That was okay, but the ostracism from fellow pupils was not. (...) I matriculated and in 1948, entered the university in Wits. [Witwatersrand in Transvaal] But with the provincial elections (...) I just couldn't see any future for the country. It was very unpleasant time. A lot of sympathy for the Germans, and I decided I can't stand, so I decided to clear out and I saw an advert in the Rhodesian Government newspaper and recruited on my 18th birthday, so I signed up and left as soon as I had my passport and arrived in Salisbury (...) I joined the civil service; I went to the magistrate's court where my place was behind the bars; there to sell revenue stamps, dog licenses and marriage licenses and so on. (Written autobiography and interview of Frans)

The European population had grown fast. In 1931 the Europeans in the Colony numbered 50 070. By 1941 their number had grown to 69 370, and in 1951 there were already 136 000 Europeans in the country.⁸ The post-war settlement boom is reflected in the rising percentage of Europeans born outside the Colony as shown in the table below.

Table1: European Population in Percentage by Place of Birth

YEAR	RHODESIA	SOUTH AFRICA	UNITED KINGDOM	OTHER
1904	---	41,6	52,9	5,5
1911	13,7	30,7	40,8	14,8
1921	24,7	34,6	31,3	9,4
1931	29,2	34,5	26,3	10
1941	34,1	27,9	26,4	11,6
1946	38	26	19	17
1951	31	30	30	9

Sources: 1904 – Southern Rhodesia, Returns of a Census, 1907, table VII; 1911 & 1921 – Southern Rhodesia, Report of the European Census, 1921, table XXI; 1931 – Schutz 1973; 1941 – Southern Rhodesia, Report of the European Census, 1941 (All referred to in Kennedy 1987, 200 – Table 7: European Birthplaces – Rhodesia.) 1946 – Rhodesian Herald: Immigration Effect Revealed by Census, 8th December 1951; 1951 – Southern Rhodesia, Annual Report of the Secretary for Internal Affairs, 1952.

The table shows that until 1946, the percentage of people born in Rhodesian had steadily risen, but after the Second World War, in the 1951 census, the share between Rhodesia, South Africa and the UK leveled out. It needs to be pointed out that being classified as British-born might conceal the fact that many of these migrants came to Southern Rhodesia via other territories, particularly South Africa. The 1952 Annual Report shows that 61,9 % of the immigrants to Southern Rhodesia state South Africa as the country of last permanent residence, compared to 27,9 % having come directly from the United Kingdom (Southern Rhodesia, Annual Report 1952).

⁸ Not all the potential immigrants qualified. The restrictions of immigration declared that one could not come to the Colony to look for work; one needed to have a guaranteed and assured employment secured with “£ 100 in the case of an immigrant from South Africa and £200 in the case of an immigrant from elsewhere” (Union of South Africa. Department of Interior 1949). Immigrants without assured employment would not be admitted to the Colony “unless they possess capital amounting to not less than £1,500 or assured income from private sources of not less than £500 per annum” (ibid.). The restrictions did not concern assured employment and capital only. The prospective immigrants also needed to know “how to read and write in a European language to the satisfaction of the Immigration Officer” (ibid.). (See Appendix 1 for population statistics.)

Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland (1953-1963)

By the 1950's calls for independence were escalating in British colonies. In its efforts to control these movements, as well as the aspirations of the settler community, the Imperial government in 1953 created the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland, also known as the Central African Federation, which comprised of Southern and Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland. Southern Rhodesia dominated the Federation politically; the franchise was based on property and income qualifications, and this effectively excluded most Africans. It was also evident that Southern Rhodesia received most of the economic benefits of the Federation. Towards the end of the decade, African resistance of white minority rule grew more vocal particularly in the northern territories, and the Federation was dissolved in 1963; Northern Rhodesia became independent as Zambia and Nyasaland as Malawi.

2. THE END OF RHODESIA

The Unilateral Declaration of Independence

In the early 1960's the nationalist movements in Southern Rhodesia were likewise actively demanding independence. Independence from the British government was also campaigned for by the white populist Rhodesian Front party, which advocated for the continuity of white minority rule in the country, "that government of Rhodesia shall remain in responsible hands, that Africans should advance on merit, that separate development of the races should take place, to preserve the identity, tradition and customs of the various people of Rhodesia" (Encyclopaedia Rhodesia 1973, 307). In addition, they promised to uphold the principles of the Land Apportionment Act and to oppose compulsory integration. (Godwin and Hancock 1999, 57.) On November 11, 1965, Ian Smith – the leader of Rhodesian Front and Rhodesia's Premier – declared the territory unilaterally independent. Smith addressed the nation on the radio stressing the heroic role of the Rhodesian nation and assuring that Rhodesian way of life would be preserved:

Whatever the consequences may be, and whatever difficulties may present themselves, we are a people who, in the past, have survived and prevailed in circumstances of utmost adversity. The mantle of the Pioneers has fallen on our shoulders and we will, I am sure, be able to face any difficulties which may occur, fortified by the same strength and courage which distinguished our forefathers in days gone by (...) The decision which we have taken today is a refusal by Rhodesians to sell their birth-right (...) We have struck a blow for the preservation of justice, civilization and Christianity, and in the spirit of this belief we have this day assumed our sovereign independence. God bless you all (Ian Smith: Rhodesia's Finest Hour, 11th November 1965).

The Unilateral Declaration of Independence on November 11, 1965, broadcast on the radio at lunchtime after the one o'clock news, was a major turning point in Zimbabwe's history. It is an event that has been permanently carved to the memory of most white Rhodesians. Alastair and Lillian, who were tobacco farmers in the north-eastern part of the country, reminisce:

Alastair: The day of UDI, Lillian and I actually went to Ruzawi School where our sons were at the time, Marandellas (...) We went to Salisbury on the way, and the whole place was sort of in a state of shock. The traffic had almost stopped and (...) it was as if someone had died, as if the head of the state had died, or something terrible had happened. And then when we got to Ruzawi, some of the

fathers there were saying: "Oh, the best thing that ever happened. Smith has done the right thing!"

Lillian: And we were nearly in tears!

Alastair: Half the people, I think were for it, probably, and the other half against it. But there was the sort of feeling of bravado amongst the Rhodesian Front supporters and feeling of fear, I think, amongst the rest of them.

Katja: Did you think it divided people?

Alastair and Lillian: No, no.

Lillian: Because I think the ones who were anti-, which I jolly well was, and I was in the Police Reserve, did everything I had to do on the radio and hated it. But I had to do it, because you had to help people in the bush. I found it brought people together in a funny way, because you felt – well, it's happened, do your best.

Alastair: But after this everyone, not everyone, but about 99% of the people all pulled together. And they, I think they felt we were fighting for a worthwhile cause. Whether we were brainwashed or how it came about, I don't know.⁹ But people felt they were prepared to do absolutely everything they could to further the cause. And there was a wonderful feeling of camaraderie amongst everybody really. Because we felt we were defending our, what do you call it – possession.

Lillian: Well, not only that – families. You see, Billy, our Billy [Alastair and Lillian's son who was killed in the "Bush War"] said: "Mom, we are fighting for something." I said: "Like what?" "We are fighting for you all, for us all, protecting you all." (Alastair and Lillian)

At a cattle and maize farm in Umtali, one family gathered together in anticipation of the broadcast:

On the 11th November, about 10.30 Jean rang us to say, "I'm sending all the children home early, please can you pick them up at 11am at the latest." We already knew that that day might be a momentous

⁹ Retrospectively, many people were quite aware of the intensity of the war propaganda they had lived through. The media was strictly censored, based on the Law and Order Maintenance Act of 1960. The newspapers published blank spaces in place of articles or words taken out by the censors. In 1977 the Parliament amended the law including spoken personal communication. According to the Government Gazette June 10, 1977: "It is also now an offence to communicate to any other person any rumour or report which is likely to cause alarm or despondency" (Fredrikse 1983, 26; 30).

one; I phoned my husband (...) who said he would be home within the hour. I rode up on my old dear horse to the school to pick up our small son (...) When my husband arrived at the farm, he said we would all go up to the Swimming Hole – because it was our Special Place. When we got there he said to the kids that although they had some time off school, they would listen carefully to the broadcast of the radio – “because it will change ALL our lives!” Fred then switched on the transistor radio and we all sat around the Swimming Hole, listened to Mr Smith (...) and no-one said anything for a long time. Then Fred said, “Well, here it comes.” (...) We walked slowly back to the farmhouse, and actually felt that “Here it comes.” It was like waiting for a big thunderstorm to break. Tension and apprehension (*Rhodesians Worldwide* 1997, 12 (4): 8. More UDI Memories).

Even staunch Rhodesian Front supporters, such as Kevin’s family, had mixed feelings about the declaration:

[The declaration was at] one o’clock, I listened to it, we sat quietly ‘cause we used to go home for lunch (...) And I remember that, we had that UDI speech, because we sat there as a family. I was 15, my sister was there. And my father said: “Ooohh!” You know, there was great mixed feeling. What are we doing? You know, it was 250 000 white people are gonna tell the rest of the world now to push off. Ok. We’re gonna just stand alone. Which is what we did (...) And I remember my dad saying to my mother: “Ooohh!” You know people were like: “Whew. Have we done the right thing or haven’t we?” We didn’t know what we’d done (...) After listening to that speech, we went and bought two new motorcars at two o’clock. We went down to town and we bought two new motorcars, brand new ones. Austin Westminster 1965 and a Mini Minor 1965. We bought two new cars. And my father said: “Listen, sanctions, now watch out.” He was a bit of a forward thinker. (Kevin)

Rhodesia’s unilateral independence was not recognized by the international community. The British Prime Minister Harold Wilson stated at once that the British Government shall have no dealings with “the rebel régime,”¹⁰ and on Britain’s request Rhodesia was placed under UN-authorized economic

¹⁰ In a speech to the Parliament Harold Wilson declared immediate actions against Rhodesia: British High Commissioner will be withdrawn, the Southern Rhodesian High Commissioner in London is asked to leave, export of arms has been stopped, all British aid will cease, Rhodesia is moved from the sterling area, special exchange control restrictions will be applied, Rhodesia will be suspended from the Commonwealth Preference Area, there will be a ban on further purchase of tobacco and sugar, and passports issued or renewed by the illegal Southern Rhodesian regime shall not be recognized (Wilson 1965).

sanctions. The sanctions, however, were not fully effective, because South Africa continued to supply Rhodesia with military equipment and financial aid, and Portugal (through its colony Mozambique) enabled Rhodesians to use their port in Beira for import and export. The sanctions also gave a boost to Rhodesian industry enforcing diversification of the production (Godwin and Hancock 1999, 54; Birmingham and Ranger 1983, 373).¹¹

While the Rhodesian whites in general might have been convinced by the government's continuous assurances that the blacks in the country were happy and content,¹² and that "the wind of politics scarcely ruffled the placid surface of the Rhodesian African's everyday life, and the vast majority were unconcerned by UDI" (Gale 1970, 65), important developments had been occurring in the nationalist movement. Several nationalist parties were formed in the early 1960's, all of which were soon banned and their leaders detained. In response to the determined banning of African political organizations, both ZAPU and ZANU began operating in exile in Zambia and established military organizations, ZIPRA and ZANLA.¹³

The War Years

In 1969 the UDI government had replaced the 1930 Land Apportionment Act with a Land Tenure Act, which divided the land in half.¹⁴ As in settler colonies the world over, land has always been the most acute source of conflict in Zimbabwe's politics. The pledge "land-to-the-masses" was the main source of inspiration and aspiration in the nationalist movement

¹¹ Sanctions-busting was common practice in UDI-Rhodesia. According to Godwin and Hancock (1999, 55): "Rhodesians in 1970 bought, sold and bartered on both sides of the Atlantic, on both sides of the Iron Curtain, and throughout Africa, the Middle East and Asia (...) Sanctions were annoying, rather than destructive, and it was tedious rather than exciting trying to break them."

¹² This was endlessly repeated by Ian Smith. On December 21, 1972, Ian Smith gave a speech at a Rotary Club in Salisbury: "I have been taken to task in certain quarters for describing our Africans as the happiest Africans in the world but nobody has yet been able to tell me where there are Africans who are happier – or, for that matter, better off – than in Rhodesia" (Ministry of Information, Immigration and Tourism press release, 21 December, 1972; quoted in Martin and Johnson 1981, 1).

¹³ The Zimbabwe African People's Unions (ZAPU) and its military wing the Zimbabwe People's Revolutionary Army (ZIPRA) were influenced and funded by the USSR, whereas the Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU) and its Zimbabwe African National Liberation Army (ZANLA) adopted a Maoist ideology and were funded by China and North Korea.

¹⁴ 44,9 million acres were allocated to blacks and whites each, although at that stage the former outnumbered the latter by 20:1. The Reserves became known as Tribal Trust Lands, with African purchase areas bordering them. (Wills 1985, 386-7; Martin and Johnson 1981, 55).

during the liberation struggle. The guerrilla war began in late 1960's with sporadic attacks on the border areas mostly in the north-eastern parts of the country. Gradually over the decade the war expanded and lasted until Zimbabwe's independence in 1980. But irrespective of decades of segregationist politics and severe limitations it cast on African political, social and economic participation as citizens of Rhodesia, in the white political discourse – both of the time and during my fieldwork – it was stressed time and again that the war for independence was not a racial war; it was a war for the protection of “Christianity and civilization,” against terrorism and communism.

Living through the war

Because of the nature of guerilla warfare, it scarcely touched white Rhodesian lives in towns in the early years. The war was mostly fought at the borders “in the bush,” and the white Rhodesian lifestyle in towns was relatively unaffected. For example Stuart, a man in his late sixties, stressed how normal the life in towns was:

The towns were, we never locked our doors, we never worried about anything. In Rhodesia it was a bush war. The war was in the bush (...) You know you talk about being in the bush and fighting. There was very little fighting. Most of that was just walking in the bush. You know the Zambezi River, we'd go three or four call-ups and there wouldn't be any fighting. We'd walk through the bush and the *mopane* flies¹⁵ and the sweat and the heat and there was nothing. And then suddenly boom-boom-boom-boom-boom and then nothing for months (...) You know the difficulty of that kind of war is by day you drive along the road and this *oke*¹⁶ here in a pair of overalls. Tonight, as soon as it gets dark he takes his overalls off and puts his uniform on and his AK 47 and then he goes and does his thing. Tomorrow morning he's back in his overalls and he's working on the side of the road. Or he's somebody's garden boy. Absolutely absurd. And how can you fight a war like that? You don't know. The bloke that you've got working in your garden is possibly a terrorist who's gonna shoot you tonight. (Stuart)

Jim, a veteran of the Second World War, attested to this:

The trouble is, you see, that the *terrs* can be there in the bush and the next day, they're walking the streets of Victoria Falls. You don't know. You didn't know who your enemy was. It wasn't like the war

¹⁵ Mopane flies, also known as mopane bees, are small eusocial insects attracted to the salt in human perspiration.

¹⁶ *Oke* is a common word for a man (similar to guy, bloke or chap), an “Afrikanerism” used in South African English.

that I served in. It was quite a terrible war. As you probably know from your readings, you can never win a terrorist war. You can't. You don't know who your enemy is. (Jim)

But from 1972 onward, the intensification of the war began to be felt, particularly in the border-area farming districts. According to Godwin and Hancock (1999, 290-291), to counter the daily threat to their lives, farmers transformed their houses into fortresses: sandbag barricades and electrical security fences were built around the houses, windows were covered with steel mesh. Special inside curtains, bunkers, bullet screens and "safe areas" inside the house were constructed, there were emergency sources of rations, power and communications, and remote-control defensive firing systems. Women and girls were taught how to shoot. A radio-communication network – the Agric-Alert – was introduced to connect the white farms to a Police control room and to one another.

Although most of the people I worked with stressed the normalcy of life during the war years, some felt more strongly that fear and suspicion was setting in in white Rhodesia. Precautions were taken in towns as well. Felix, who lived in Salisbury (Harare) at the time recalled:

We were hammered psychologically and politically, and physically relatively a small part, but you can't underestimate that because it was threat to life (...) I mean we actually got it in my home. We'd actually prepared for a mortar attack. Cause I'd read about it in sit-reps [situation reports] that we'd identified potential terrorists that were coming along the Makabuzi valley, which was just about one to two kilometers from where we lived [in Salisbury/Harare]. They'd apparently come down, they'd gone along the river line, that we'd heard. And I was actually prepared. It was like preparing for an attack. We had all the emergency supplies set up in a place in the middle of the house. We couldn't strengthen the place, if they're gonna come though the roof, they'll come through. But we made sure as far as possible; we had a mattress that we could cover ourselves with. But if these things went, we'd protect ourselves. In our house. I got hold of a weapon (...) So it was down to that. I was training, and so did my wife. And yet, in our home we were never, there was never, this was just the fear of it. The fear that you can have people attacking you by remote control at a distance and then following it up with some kind of urban assault. But when you're living in a country that was 90 whatever % under martial law, when every day you read of situations that were just threatening and dangerous, you felt like that, you thought like that. (Felix)

In the mid-seventies the war escalated sharply. In white Rhodesia this induced the extension and intensification of the call-up system. By 1976 the call-up system involved all white males from 18 to 50 years of age; older men operated in the Police Reserve patrolling their home areas.

The perpetual cycle of call-ups – six weeks in the war and six weeks at one's job – dominated the lives of white families for years. Two men, in their twenties during the aggravation of the war, recalled the continuity of the call-ups:

1972 – that was the start of hell. That was the beginning of the end for us (...) Those days we sat in the lorries like sardines going up from Bulawayo, to about 600 mile drive to go and fight the war. We sat sleeping like this. And as soon as they said [bangs the table three times]: "Pay attention, the war starts now." Ok. And we'd all: "Ok, where're the gooks?" You know what I mean. Terrorists. We called them gooks. But then as time progressed, it became more and more. The first time we went, we were sitting like this in the lorries, [shows how cramped they were], sitting, there's the wheel, there's the outside of the truck, sitting like this, touching, the rifles like that. We could fall asleep sitting up, because there was no space to fall. So many white guys. Then the next call-up you went, there was a bit of elbow room in the truck. Because the *okes* suddenly come into South Africa. All the scaredy cats. All the ones that didn't quite like this situation. We called it the Beitbridge 500. *I* didn't like it, but there was a war to fight. You know that, now, now there was a war. Before, [in the previous call-ups] *I* didn't like the wasting of time and everything. Being around the bush there and weekends and short hair and playing soldiers. Shining things, shining buckles and shining everything here, no, no, no, no, no, no. Now it started, the war started. I'd just turned 23 when that war started BANG, like that. And then it started up in the north-east border area up there, in the Centenary. And over the course of eight years it got progressively worse. It was like a cancer growing in a human being. The terrorists came there. Then they came there, then they came there. And towards the end, what happened was the whites were leaving in a big way. Because it was going like this, six weeks in, six weeks out, six weeks in, six weeks out. Six weeks at the job, six weeks at your normal job, six weeks soldiering, six weeks job and disrupting. Whew! (Kevin)

My life was just work, back, work, back, and all that time the war was getting on, it was getting further and further, there was less and less guys going to the army, guys were taking the gap, and people were leaving, people dying. So eventually they said: Ok, sorry [despite working in essential services] so you must do call-ups again. So then it got even harder because then I was away for six weeks in the army, then I was six weeks in, then six weeks out. It was as you came out from the army then you pull up for the next six weeks and then in that six weeks period when I was at home, I was

away from home because I was on the job [on the railways] three days away, one day back, three days away, one day back. (Keith)

In addition to the intensification of the call-up system, the war affected the white home-front in other ways as well. Traveling became dangerous, because the dirt roads could be mined. Petrol rationing had been reintroduced to the country in 1974. This, in addition to restricted movement in the operational areas, limited travel. Holiday and emigration allowances were cut down, and a convoy system was introduced on the main roads. There was a daily convoy organized from Bulawayo to Beitbridge, on the South African border:

If you were going on holiday, you would have to go in convoy from Bulawayo to Beitbridge. You know it became such a routine that our children even knew when you got to Beitbridge, everybody got there at the same time and forms had to be filled and all that. You know, one knew that she had to take the weapons; she and I would take the weapons because we had to leave them there. Things like that, which in retrospect, you know we took it for granted at the time. But now that we think about it, these children knew all about carting these automatic weapons to the police station (...) We had this Uzi and our daughters knew how to use it as well as I did (...). And then in the front of the convoy, you'd have a police car or a truck with a man standing at the back and on the cab would be a machine gun and then there'd be one at the back as well. The thing was that they would travel quite slowly, you know, but, if you wanted to take the chance you could just go on your own. And there was a speed limit in Rhodesia but the police never enforced it on these long roads, because the faster you went the better your chances were. (Claudia)

Thus, the landscapes of violence were not only soldiered through in the bush. Francesca reflected on the war from the point of view of a white child. She recalled having tea at her mother's friend one day during the war, when she was about ten years old:

Mrs. Elliot was totally racist. I mean totally into the whole Rhodesia Front (...) I remember she used to have a plaque of Ian Smith in copper above the fireplace and she and my mother were dear friends, but my mother knew that she mustn't talk politics. That was just a no-subject. Mrs. Elliot was a primary school teacher and I adored her. She used to make us ginger bread houses at Christmas and if you had a headache at school, she'd give you an Imperial Mint to make you feel better. And she was lovely. But she had this thing. I can clearly remember during the war, the Rhodesian war, us going for tea and arranging the big chairs so that we could watch the helicopters with the body bags. Now this is

somebody who wouldn't watch a film that had an age restriction of like more than twelve because it might be violent! (Francesca)

This image seems to culminate something essential about the white home front experience. Life went on as pleasantly as before. Biscuits were baked and tea parties held, but violence – or the potentiality of it – was ever present, hovering above. In this powerful image and in the stories of convoy travels for family holidays down south when women drove with Uzis on their lap, the threat of violence was domesticated. Fear and preparation for violence had become embodied, as established and taken-for-granted parts of life. It is perhaps against this perpetuated “normalcy” together with the endless and prolonged propaganda of “happy Africans” that the white Rhodesians failed to see the extent of popular support the guerrillas enjoyed.

The Independence

The escalation of war, the economic downhill slide, and the mounting white emigration put increasing pressure on Smith's government in addition to which there were intensifying demands from South Africa, Britain and the US for settling the war. An “internal settlement” between the UDI Rhodesian government and moderate African parties that were not involved in the guerilla warfare was reached in 1978. In April 1979 elections – which did not include the major nationalist parties ZANU and ZAPU – were held, and Bishop Muzorewa's United African National Council party (UANC) gained the majority of the vote. Muzorewa became the first black Prime Minister of the country now called Zimbabwe Rhodesia. Neither the agreement nor Muzorewa's government was internationally recognized and the war continued still. A peace conference that included all parties was finally held in Britain at the Lancaster House in late 1979.¹⁷ Internationally monitored common-roll elections were held over the last three days of February 1980. White Rhodesia expected and hoped that the moderate Muzorewa would win at the polls. Thus, when the election results were released on March 4, Mugabe's landslide victory came as a considerable shock. That same day Mugabe addressed the nation in a conciliatory manner, stressing reconciliation and reconstruction, and moderate social-economic change. According to Martin and Johnson, “It was a masterly display of statesmanship. He spoke of turning swords into ploughshares to rebuild the war-torn nation, of the need for reconciliation

¹⁷ The question of land became the stumbling block in the negotiations as Mugabe was reluctant to compromise on the issue. Eventually an agreement was reached, which guaranteed the protection of property. Land was to be resettled on “willing seller, willing buyer”- principle, and the British and American governments agreed to set up a fund, from which compensation for white farmers would be paid, and which would be in operation for the next ten years.

and not recrimination and he assured the whites that they had a place in the country – as ‘Zimbabweans’ (1981, 330). On April 18, 1980 Zimbabwe became independent and Reverend Canaan Banana was installed as the first President of the country with Robert Mugabe as Prime Minister.¹⁸

A decade of gradually intensifying guerrilla war, the concomitant mental and physical isolation from the rest of the world, and the endless, prolonged state propaganda had not managed to prepare white Rhodesians for what was to come, and they found Mugabe’s victory deeply confusing. One man who at the time was employed by the Central Intelligence Organization (CIO) of Rhodesia captures the feeling of disbelief:

We went into the city when the [election] results were announced; we were called into a conference room. The radio was turned on and the results were announced. And there was just this hush that fell on the assembled people. That’s amazing, you didn’t know what the people [Africans] were thinking, and you suddenly realize, there’s this ghastly realization that all these years you’ve put in have been, if you add it all up, what the hell we thought, what the hell have you risked everything for? What was it for? (...) And I wandered out into the city with a colleague. It was weird, there were mobs of blacks wandering around, shouting. Ululating. Sort of prancing around, tearing these election posters. It was more like a kind of weird political carnival atmosphere. And you know this was your, this was your home. Absolutely strange. And yet, we worked in a situation where we could see it in a sense. We just didn’t wanna believe it. We didn’t. We somehow shut from it. It was the last thing you wanted to see. And in that sense with Mugabe coming in the way he did, it was probably about the worst mixture you could have. That was about the worst possible. We’d actually underestimated his share of the seats. And we dealt with intelligence, we got these signals coming. You could see the actual trend as these signals came in. But you still, there was something that said to you: No! This is not gonna happen! But I suppose from childhood we’d been taught that. We’d been taught it couldn’t happen here. We’d been taught that Rhodesia was something different. And yet as the war progressed, you could see that something was coming. We were getting deeper and deeper into the bloody shit.

White Emigration in the 1980’s

A sense of disbelief at Mugabe’s victory was quickly pushed aside as the whites in Zimbabwe began to pack their bags. Emigration had steadily intensified from 1976 onwards, and it escalated considerably after

¹⁸ In 1987 the office of Prime Minister was abolished and replaced by an executive president, an office that Mugabe has since held.

independence. During the period from 1976 until 1984, 148 749 people emigrated from Zimbabwe, with an average number of emigrants being 18 352 per year.¹⁹ The pace of emigration slowed down over the latter half of 1980's, during which time there were slightly less than 5000 emigrants per year (*Republic of Zimbabwe, Quarterly Digest of Statistics* 1990). Not all the whites emigrated officially; many left to go "on holiday" and never returned. It is estimated that by mid-1990's there were about 80 000 whites left in Zimbabwe.

According to a survey conducted by Bill Eaton (1996), about half of the settler emigrants of the 1980's landed in South Africa, in 1980-81 as much as 62,4 % of the total number of emigrants (CSO Migration and Tourist Statistics, ref., Tevera and Zinyama 2002, 13). A third emigrated to the United Kingdom, and the rest mostly to Australia, New Zealand, United States and Canada. Through the decade the proportion of South Africa as a destination gradually lessened, and after 1990, the UK has been the principle destination for emigrants from Zimbabwe, totaling about 20-25 % annually.

Since the 1960's, South Africa has become the home for numerous former colonials – not only from Zimbabwe, but from Kenya, Zambia, Mozambique as well – who drifted down south as their colonial home-countries became independent. South Africa, many ex-Rhodesians stated, was also the easiest option; immigrating to the neighboring country involved the least expenses, and those with a South-African background were able to reclaim their original citizenship. Many had family and friends in South Africa, which eased their acclimatization. And last, though not the least, they felt that South Africa, as a society, was closest to their experience; they felt that they could, more than in other parts of the world, continue to lead the kind of lives they had lead in Rhodesia.

White Rhodesians came down to South Africa in two major waves. The first lot of immigrants arrived prior to Independence in 1979, because, I was told, they were scared for their lives, or they were not prepared to live under any form of black rule. Many ex-Rhodesians felt that this first surge of Rhodesian exiles had given the rest a bad name in South Africa. "The white South Africans," Charles reflected, "looked at the Rhodesians as over-reactors: they should have stayed there and built the country instead of leaving it." According to Vincent, the first wave of emigrants was a terrible lot. "They call themselves Rhodesians. We left at the end of -83. And as far as we're concerned, we were Zimbabweans as well."

¹⁹ Based on the official records, the percentage of whites out of this group of emigrants cannot be accurately determined. Records of African emigration through official ports started in April 1978, and since then, the racial division of the emigrants is not shown (*Republic of Zimbabwe 1990: Table 2.0 Recorded Migration through Official Ports*). See Appendix 1, Table 4.

The second major wave was not as edgy; it consisted of people that arrived steadily in the early years of the 1980's. Charles recounted his own emigration plans, which he had begun to make in December 1979:

It was evident to me that things were not going to be the same. Or let's say there were going to be big changes. And I said to the family: We've got three options here. We either leave the country, if it comes under communist rule, which it looked like happening. We either leave as a family in a regular manner, we emigrate. If it's a bit of a rough ride, then I'll stay behind and you will go, so I get the family out the way and I stay behind, because we didn't know if the ceasefire was going to hold, and I didn't want them to be there if the country went into a Mozambiquan situation, or worse still, as a Congo situation of the 1960 experience. Both of which I was fairly familiar with because of my work. And I didn't want to see a similar thing happening to my family. And the very worst thing, which I couldn't really imagine happening, but if the worst had come to worst, there was a refugee situation where you just pick up your things and go, whatever you can carry. So we had these three options, and we planned on the best option but we had the fallback options, option two and three, if it really became necessary. (Charles)

As the election results came out, others started making emigration plans as well. Stuart and Marjorie began to contemplate where to move. Stuart was South African born but Marjorie had come to Rhodesia from England in the early 1960's. They recall:

Stuart: I thought that maybe Abel Muzorewa, I thought he stood a chance. But when we heard that Mugabe had won the elections, and I got home that evening. And Marjorie said to me: "Now what?" I said: "It's not now what, it's now when." And we actually stayed another year. But in that year we planned to move. I wrote all over the world. I wrote to Australia, New Zealand, United States, Canada. [But] I'm an African. I don't think that I could ever leave Africa.

Marjorie: I didn't want to come to South Africa because of the apartheid. And I made that quite clear. But it came to "Wherever thou goest, I will go." And there didn't seem to be an alternative. Stuart was coming home. And we had two children and their education (...) My instinct would have been to go to England. Purely to go home, I suppose. But that to him wasn't practical. And I'm not sure if I would have coped with that weather anymore. And that's how ridiculous, but it is a definite way of life. (Stuart and Marjorie)

Many took the attitude of “wait and see” and “gave Mugabe a few years,” as they explained. In a couple of years, I was told, they had become concerned about the quality of social services such as health care and education. They explained that they had wanted to provide a more secure future for their children. Many felt that their possibilities of advancement in their jobs in new Zimbabwe had come to a standstill, because Africans were now entering positions previously unavailable for them. Some seemed to be caught in the general wave of white emigration. For instance Graham, who emigrated in 1983, once said: “I don’t remember ever actually consciously making a decision [to leave]. It was just that everybody was going.” Vincent and Claudia stayed on in Zimbabwe for a couple of years and also left in 1983. Their decision to leave developed gradually:

Vincent: We had a lot of trouble in Matabeleland after 1980.

Claudia: And there were a lot killed around that time, -82, -83. I think one of our decisions were to leave, you know we were sort of getting that way inclined, but one of our decisions was Christmas 1982, was just a total tragedy. That Christmas we had no petrol at all. People were leaving their cars in queues, sometimes for a couple of days (...) And all our children were at home for Christmas. [They were all studying in South Africa at the time.] The man who owned the garage where Vincent had an account, his son-in-law, his son, his two grandchildren were all shot in December of -82. Two little boys like this. Our daughter was thrilled she’d bumped into an old school friend of hers and her husband. He was killed two days later. He just actually disappeared; they didn’t find his body for six months. His grandfather was killed at the same time. So now all this happened in Matabeleland *after* 1980²⁰. And it was that Christmas that our son-in-law just said, and he had parents there: “I don’t ever want to come back.”

Vincent: We just told people that our daughters were all living in South Africa and that’s why we were leaving. Which was our main reason. (Vincent and Claudia)

²⁰ Vincent and Claudia were referring to the distraught political atmosphere in Zimbabwe right after independence, although the violence towards their acquaintances was most probably not directly related to that. In the early 1980’s the Zimbabwe government – with a special force of the national army, the Fifth Brigade – launched a campaign of brutal violence directed against the Ndebele in the pursuit of “ZAPU dissidents.” Thousands of civilians in Matabeleland were killed in the *Gukurahundi*. The atrocities finally ended in the 1987 Unity Agreement, in which ZAPU was incorporated into ZANU. (See Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace 1999; Alexander, McGregor and Ranger 2000; Werbner 1991; 1998b; Windrich 2002.)

In many cases immigrating to South Africa was a return migration of a sort: the ancestors had trekked north from South Africa and now the descendants were drifting down, having become Rhodesians during the course of generations. Susanna, a lady in her early seventies was from a South African, Afrikaans-speaking background. Her paternal grandfather had been a wagon driver for the Zeederburg coaches and had brought his family out as early as in the early 1890's. In the 1980's Susanna and all her siblings "came back" to South Africa:

I thought all my children were moving out as well but only the elder daughter moved out (...) My younger daughter, who was the first one who was gonna move, but she's still there. She's living in Harare with her family. And doing fine, they're quite happy. They've weathered the storm and they've stayed there. They're living in a fool's paradise, I think. But they live from day to day and they seem to be all right.

[Susanna divorced her first husband and immigrated to South Africa with her second husband, a former mayor of a small town in Rhodesia.] Rex and I were fortunate. His eldest son had emigrated. He was a town clerk and that also went black very quickly. And all the town clerks and mayors were replaced by black people. So he was out of a job so he came down here. He's now in England anyway. He left here too. So we came down to visit him in August on a holiday. And we registered with a senior citizen's employment bureau in Durban (...) And they needed somebody to run the canteen. And somebody retired like my husband to be the caretaker and security bloke. And live on side! And we got the job.

We all came back to South Africa at different times. We didn't all come together. All my sisters came out. My late husband and I went to Australia. We had six weeks in Australia. But it was just when things started to, end of 1979. But because our children and his [the second husband's] children were all in South Africa, we couldn't possibly be that far away from my children and grandchildren. Because we wouldn't be able to come out often and they could certainly not afford to come and see us. So we decided on South Africa. But you know, I've often wondered if we had gone to Australia, they might have all been with us by now. We might have got them over, one by one. (Susanna)

In spite of the fact that almost a hundred years had passed from the time Susanna's pioneer grandparents had migrated to Rhodesia, Susanna says they "all came back" to South Africa in the 1980's. And unlike many others, she had lots of family in South Africa. All her elderly siblings were now living in South Africa, although some of their descendants and some of Susanna's stepchildren have either stayed on in Zimbabwe or emigrated

to the UK and New Zealand. Susanna and her husband's decision to immigrate to South Africa was motivated by the idea of keeping the family as close together as possible. They would have preferred Australia, but that would have meant losing the family. Her husband's son had already come down and they joined him to seek for employment. From being the mayor and an hotelier in Rhodesia, Susanna and Rex began to run the canteen and to work as the "caretaker and security bloke." Together with her third husband, Jim, Susanna now lived in a Moth²¹ cottage, where pensioners pay a certain percentage of their income as rent. "We've got enough money to live for ten years," Susanna said. "And after that we'd better die," Jim continued. "Oh, we'd better!" Susanna chuckled, "We have to go to the vet and say: 'Put us down now, hey!'"

An intensive, all-consuming decade of war had crafted in the open major divisions within the white society – between those who took the run and did not stay and fight for "their country"; between those who supported the politics of the Rhodesian Front and those that were against it. But conjointly it also bound the white community tightly together. "The war made us a nation," I was repeatedly told. "We all cried together; we all knew somebody who'd died; so we became a very caring country," said Vincent. Thus the UDI years also eased off potential social and economic tension between different fractions of the white society, between pioneer descendants and newcomers, between people of different classes and ethnic backgrounds. The dominant mood in white Rhodesia of the 1970's had been an inward-turning, stubborn feeling of "going alone," which was enforced by stressing the heritage of fierce independence and self-sufficiency of the pioneer ancestors. I believe that this background of a pro-longed war, its cocoon-like insulation and the consequent determined sense of togetherness among white Rhodesians, is one of the key points to understanding the intensity with which the Rhodesians have stuck together in exile.

²¹ The Moths (Memorable order of the Tin Hats) is a war veteran organization, of which many, if not most, of the ex-Rhodesian men I talked with were members.

PART II GOD'S OWN COUNTRY

Prologue



Picture 1: Rhodes' grave at the Matopos

The symbolic investment in sacralizing the landscape seems in Zimbabwe to be an ongoing, fervent process, very much on the contemporary agenda. The significance of sacralizing the land is reflected in the extent to which land and landscape – and here I am not referring solely to the multifaceted debate on the current land question – is a major topic on the contemporary research agenda regarding Zimbabwe. Much of this research addresses the distinct ways in which landscape is sacralized in human interaction (e. g., Mukonyora 2000; Ranger 1996, 1997, 1999a). It also attempts to uncover the interlacing of landscape and memory, locating how natural elements, such as mountains or hills or rivers, or human built forms – such as ruins and shrines – may be used as mnemonic tools and arenas of moral debate that enable people to remember and talk about the past (Schmidt 1997, 2000; Mazarire 2000, McGregor 2005b).

It is significant that the sacralization and memorialization of landscape, inherent of moral and spiritual investments, is regarded as manifesting the power relations in society, from pre- to postcolonial Zimbabwe (Moore 1998a, 1998b; Werbner 1998a, 1998b; Ranger 1989, 1999b).¹ Analyzing

¹ For overviews of current research see *Trasformations* 44, 2000 (special issue) and McGregor 2005a.

the post-independence history of Zimbabwe, Richard Werbner (1998b) for one examines how political and material struggles over land become inscribed into the landscape and into popular memory in the form of commemorialization. In the postcolony, Werbner attests, the official memory of the state has attempted to silence contradictory memory practices; in Matabeleland it has been dangerous to erect shrines to those who died in the 1970's, let alone in the hands of the state in the 1980's.² He argues that the memorialization of landscape in Zimbabwe is unique even within the Southern African region:

Zimbabwe is exceptional in the extensive sacred landscaping of the countryside (...) by grave shrines for the nation's liberators. Nowhere else in this part of Africa has the politics of nation-building been so significantly advanced through contradictory appropriation, both in memory and memorial, of the land's human remains; nowhere else (...) has there been so much memory politics for the symbolic winning of the sacred terrain, so much contesting of legitimacy as a sacred bond with the land (Werbner 1998b, 99).

When it comes to sacred sites deeply woven into political struggles – both material and symbolic, black and white – The Matopos Hills are a case in point. The place is the epitome of Rhodesian mythical history. It is a site of natural, majestic beauty of landscape, and it is also the burial place of white Rhodesia's ancestor, Cecil John Rhodes. The rugged rock formations are unique and captivating. According to a Rhodesian tourist brochure from the 1950's, the lure of Matopos lies in the profound sense of past one perceives and grasps amongst the monumental boulders:

It is the mysterious and all-pervading sense of the past which captures the imagination most forcibly in this beautiful country. The many rock paintings, in caves and in sheltered places on the hills, are evidence of an ancient people and suggest that the area has been inhabited continuously since at least the Middle Stone Age. In more recent times, the Matopos saw deeds of witchcraft and savagery before the coming of the White Man at the end of the 19th Century, and, even today, local Africans regard certain spots as being "dwelling places of the spirits." It is in this setting of grandeur and mystery that visitors may stop at the famous "View of the World," the site of the grave of Cecil John Rhodes, founder of Rhodesia (Rhodesia's National Parks: The Matopos).

Rhodes had long before his death decided he wanted to be buried in the country which bore his name. His initial ideal site had been Great

² On the postcolonial state violence of the 1980's and the consequent repressing and silencing of alternative memory, see Alexander, McGregor, and Ranger 2000; Windrich 2002.

Zimbabwe, the ruins of a medieval city build of stone, where he had arranged for the Shangani Patrol – 34 white settlers killed in the Ndebele uprisings in 1893 – to be buried, a place, which, Rhodes intended, would become the Rhodesian Valhalla (Ranger 1999b, 30).³ Matopos, however, was the site where Rhodes had negotiated with the Ndebele *indunas*, which brought the uprisings in Matabeleland to a close in 1896. During these meetings Rhodes is said to have been overwhelmed by the grandiosity of the hills (Rotberg 1988, 572), and decided it would become his final resting place. After deciding on his own burial site, Rhodes had the mortal remains of the Shangani Patrol exhumed and brought to the Matopos, where the cenotaph honoring these men stands today in the vicinity of Rhodes' grave.

Thus, when Rhodes died in 1902 in Muizenburg, near Cape Town in South Africa, his body was put on the train – his feet pointing in the direction of the destination – to embark on his last journey towards the Matopos Hills, where he had requested to be buried. He traveled on the unfinished track of what he had once imagined would become the route from Cape to Cairo⁴. Because of the second Boer war, an armored train preceded the train carrying Rhodes' corpse. Ken Harmer (1997, 18)

³ Great Zimbabwe intrigued and perplexed European travelers and colonizers. Carl Mauch, a German geologist and a traveler, had visited the ruined city of Zimbabwe in 1871. He presumed that the ruins were an ancient palace of the Queen of Sheba. (Prior to him, Portuguese travelers and traders had already suggested the same.) The novelist H. Rider Haggard in his immensely popular romantic adventure book – first published in 1885 – saw the ruins as the ancient site of King Salomon's mines. Rhodes used the myth to raise interest in Europe for his newly founded colony. Under Rhodes' patronage an archeological expedition from England arrived in 1891 to investigate the ruins. Theodore Bent dismissed the Queen of Sheba and King Salomon hypotheses and instead claimed that Great Zimbabwe was constructed by Sabaeen Arabs (Pikirayi 2001). Although archeologists already in the beginning of the 1900's concluded that the settlements were of autochthonous origin and reasonably recent (medieval rather than of antiquity), the settler view of the non-African – or mysteriously un-known – origins persisted (e.g., Garlake 1982). In tourist brochures published in the 1960's the mystery is still emphasized; their origins are "an ancient riddle that has not yet been fully answered" (Rhodesia's National Parks and Game Reserves, n.d.). (See Ranger 2004 for a discussion of the significance of Great Zimbabwe in contemporary "patriotic history" in Zimbabwe.)

⁴ In 1893 Rhodes had incorporated a railway company – the Bechuanaland Railways – which was to construct the railway line from Vryburg to Bulawayo. Four years later, the line finally reached Bulawayo. The scene of the arrival was described in the following way: "Crowds of spectators caught sight of a faint column of smoke over the crest of the rise, and then they shouted themselves hoarse as the engine puffed down the avenue of cheering men, and pulled up at the improvised station which was festooned with flags and bunting together

describes the scene of the arrival of the burial train in the following way: “[T]he burial train was met on the way by many, many people wanting to pay their respects to the “Father of Africa.” So many wreaths were laid each day that only a few were selected to go all the way to Bulawayo. The rest were burned each night next to ‘his’ railway line where ‘his’ train had stopped.”

Rudyard Kipling’s oft-quoted words in a poem written as a eulogy to Rhodes capture what Terence Ranger refers to as a celebration of Rhodes as the ancestor deity of the country⁵:

It is his will that he look forth
 Across the world he won –
 The granite of the ancient North –
 Great spaces washed with sun.
 There shall he patient take his seat
 (As when the Death he dared),
 And there await a people’s feet
 In the paths that he prepared.

There, till the vision he foresaw
 Splendid and whole arise,
 And unimagined Empires draw
 To council ‘neath his skies,
 he immense and brooding Spirit still
 Shall quicken and control.
 Living he was the land, and dead,
 His soul shall be her soul!

Rhodes’ immortality, the historian Peter Maylam argues, has rested less on the hundreds of books and articles written about him, but much more “on monuments, memorials and the ubiquity of his name” (2002, 3). Maylam quotes the Rhodesian-born historian Richard Wood, who reflects what growing up as a white boy in Rhodesia was like:

Such a boy (...) would possibly attend a school named ‘Cecil John Rhodes’⁶ (...) would look forward to the mid-winter holidays which were called ‘Rhodes and Founders’; would, if he was lucky,

with a waggish inscription, “Two Roads to progress – Railroads and Cecil Rhodes” (Harmer 1997, 17).

⁵ Kipling’s poem *The Burial* was written in 1902 and published in 1903 in *Five Nations*.

⁶ Without going into the fascinating topic of names in more detail, the names of many schools have recently been changed. To name a few: Cecil John Rhodes School in now Gweru Primary School; Rhodes Estate Preparatory School is now Matobo Primary; Churchill High now Josiah Tongogara High; Queen Elizabeth Girls now Sally Mugabe Primary (Simpson 2003).

be taken for holiday to Rhodes Hotel on Rhodes Estate and when he was not on holiday would possibly walk down Rhodes Avenue into town and draw money from the Rhodes Building Society (...). He would pick up a bank note and holding it to the sun would see Rhodes' face imprinted in the note. He would walk down the main streets in the major cities and would see Rhodes' statue towering down from its pedestal (...) The image was so firmly ingrained that Rhodes assumed almost God-like proportions in his young mind (ibid.).

In choosing his burial site, Rhodes was doubtlessly not only captivated by the monumentality of the natural landscape, but remarkably impressed and moved by the mystery of the place: the spiritual significance the hills held for the Ndebele. Mzilikazi, the founder of the Ndebele kingdom, had also been buried on the Matopos. In addition, the hills are the home for shrines of the High God, *Mwali*. According to Terence Ranger (1999b, 19-20), the rocks of the Matopos became a symbol of God's endurance and authority, but their power also rests on the fact that the rocks speak: the *Mwali* adepts, who to this day make pilgrimages to the hills, may hear the voice of the deity from the rocks.⁷ Hence, the Matopos bore a deep religious significance in the African belief systems as a source of well being of the land. In choosing his own burial site, Rhodes was thus very concretely engraving himself into the politico-spiritual heart and essence of the land.

Rhodes' grave on a summit of Malidudzimu is, like the bare boulders surrounding it, very plain, even austere, his epitaph effective in its simplicity. It is realized to Rhodes' precise plan:

I admire the grandeur and loneliness of the Matopos in Rhodesia, and therefore I desire to be buried in the Matopos on the hill which I used to visit and which I called the 'View of the World', in a square to be cut in the rock on the top of the hill, covered with a plain brass plate with these words thereon: 'Here lie the remains of Cecil John Rhodes' (...)⁸

Rhodes was explicit that he wanted his chosen burial site to become a place of pilgrimage and recreation for white Rhodesians.⁹ He was therefore not

⁷ The cave paintings in the hills suggest that the area, which has been populated by humans for more than 40 000 years, has been linked with rain making ceremonies long before the establishment of *Mwali* shrines, which, according to Ranger's estimate, were established there some hundreds of years ago (Ranger 1999b, 19-20).

⁸ An extract from Rhodes' will exhibited at the Matopos. Fieldnotes on the Matopos, July 8, 2000.

⁹ Along with other visitors to the country, Rhodes Scholars were always taken to the grave in pilgrimage. (Terence Ranger in personal communication, July

only overwhelmed by the splendor of the view, but also by the accessibility of the place. The granite dome of Malindudzimu is relatively effortless to climb, as Rhodes himself put it, “easy enough for a grandmother to manage” (cited in Ranger 1999b, 30). The gravesite and the rugged hills truly became the place of white Rhodesian pilgrimage par excellence. Intriguingly, the easy accessibility of the site seemed to add to its appeal as a pilgrimage site, unlike in many other cases, where the impassability of the terrain to be crossed enhances significance of the sacred journey.¹⁰ In white Rhodesian practice it was significant that the site which epitomized the sublime beauty of the country, its “mysterious and magical” spirits, as well as its colonial origins could be visited pleasantly by all. In the Rhodesian ideal it was precisely this accessibility that emphasized that this was *our land*.¹¹ Ranger (ibid., 11) argues that the hills became the place of meditation and communion with nature symbolizing more than any other place the special relationship white Rhodesians had with the landscape. Rhodes himself had admired the “grandeur and loneliness” of the hills, suggesting a deep-rooted idea in “Western” thought that it is in “isolation” where nature compels one to find solitude within oneself.

In addition to signifying a sense of certain at-onement with nature, the Matopos symbolizes a deep bond with what could be called a heritage territory for the ex-Rhodesians. Symbolically the white Rhodesians may consider themselves as descendants of Rhodes.¹² Visiting the Matopos,

8, 2000.) In his will (Rhodes made wills relatively frequently, this was in his eighth), Rhodes established a “Colonial Scholarship for “male students” to study at Oxford. The ideal candidates, Rhodes suggested, should attain four-tenths for scholarship (they should be no bookworms, “no Latin and Greek ‘swots’”), two-tenths for athletics, two-tenths for manhood and two-tenths for leadership (Rotberg 1988, 666-667).

¹⁰ Yeal Zerubavel for example shows how pilgrimages of youth groups to the Masada Mountain in Israel fulfilled a national mission by reembracing a sacred ancient past. The fact that the journey required an arduous trek through a desert added to its power. Pilgrimage to the mountain revived “the spirit of active heroism, determination and the readiness for self-sacrifice” (2004, 237).

¹¹ In recent years a new policy has been installed, and residents too have to pay to enter the Matobo national park. I was told that the local white residents of Bulawayo are not taking the policy very well. According to David, who was in his early fifties and had recently re-visited Zimbabwe: “When I went back, I found that the locals, well, the whites, were sort of boycotting, because now they charge you to go in there. And white Rhodesians have the attitude that that was part of their back garden. You know, that belonged to them. They could go in there whenever they liked. And I think they’re objecting this idea that they’ve gotta pay now.”

¹² This is often expressed in white Rhodesian poetry. One verse may serve as an example: “Look to the sun its warmth may heal – *You are a child of Rhodes, I too* – Strength, courage, do not let them steal – Stand tall, undefeated the Rhodesian that is you (Walker 1986, 12; my italics).

climbing amongst the sturdy rocks balancing on each other and glancing at the view of Rhodes' choosing, embraces the participant within the shared landscape and the continuum of the community's origin narrative. The Matopos – and Rhodes' grave as the key topographic marker – is an indispensable spatial commemorative locus. At the gravesite one may sense the presence of the ancestor and consequently sense one's own belonging in the land. It is in this place that the ancestor myth is dug into the rough rock. It is a place that crystallizes how "we" came into being.

According to David Bunn, who analyzes the representational power of graves in the Eastern Cape of colonial South Africa, it is customary to think of graves as sites of memorialization of the past. He argues however, that graves "address civil society in the future tense. (...) Their ability to function within the general syntax of mourning depends on the presumption of a stable civil society in the future, administered by those with roughly the same attitudes to the body and to property" (2002, 61). However, in a Zimbabwean postcolony there is hardly a future tense for former white Rhodesians, and symbolic markers, such as Rhodes' grave, are brought into violent confrontations. The significance of Rhodes' grave to former white Rhodesians today is condensed by one Mrs I. Hopley writing in the *Rhosarian*, the journal of the ex-Rhodesians' organization in South Africa:

[Rhodes' grave] is a site much revered and it became the focal point of a culture that developed in that country which honoured [Rhodes] by naming itself Rhodesia then, and which imbued in its settler citizens a love of nature and the wide open spaces and with that, an open friendliness for which ex-Rhodesians are noted (Hopley 1998, 40).

Let us consider Mrs Hopley's pledge in the light of Richard Werbner's argument. Nowhere else in Africa, Werbner writes, is the struggle for the symbolic winning of sacred terrain as impassioned and intense as it is in Zimbabwe. Nowhere else is there so much contestation for the legitimacy of solemn bond with the land (1998b, 99). Mrs Hopley is writing in passionate defence of Rhodes' grave, affirming its significance for the "settler citizens." She does this as a reaction to political occurrences concerning the burning issue of land. Mrs. Hopley's cry of distress followed from the launching of the occupation of white-owned farms in Zimbabwe in 1998, after President Mugabe had ordered approximately 1500 white farms to be redistributed to landless peasants. Alongside with the farm occupations, other white engravings on the land were brought under attack. During that same year a cultural pressure group called Sangano Munhumutapa, founded by Lawrence "Warlord" Chakaredza (who changed his name to Munhumutapa III after a dynasty of kings who ruled Zimbabwe from the 15th to the 17th century), threatened to exhume the remains of Cecil Rhodes

and throw his bones in the Zambezi River if Britain did not arrange to rebury the bones outside the country (The Standard March 31, 2002).

Subsequently, the now late Chakaredza abandoned the plan, which met with resistance from traditional elders, politicians and business people alike. However, the war veterans,¹³ determined in destruction of the monuments of the country's colonial past – of which Rhodes' grave is by far symbolically the most significant – have brought Rhodes' removal onto surface again (The Standard March 31, 2002; Makura 2002). According to Makura, President Mugabe's Zanu PF's agents – war veterans and the militia – are urging people to destroy colonial monuments, whose mere presence is said to be the cause behind the country's economic plight. Although other monuments have been attacked – among them the statue of David Livingstone at Victoria Falls – Rhodes' grave is under the heaviest fire. The grave is blamed for unleashing a white colonial demon, who is responsible for turning people's hearts away from the president (Makura 2002).

Meanwhile, the National History Museum in Bulawayo has developed new plans for the Matopos and for Rhodes' grave. Entumbane, the burial grave of Mzilikazi, and the oracular cave at Njelele are seen as retaining intense spiritual significance; they will be protected in order to keep tourists out (Ranger 2001, 15). By contrast, there are plans to develop a Colonial Theme Park at Rhodes's grave in order to attract tourists and the necessary revenue. According to Jackson Ndlovu from the National History Museum, "The grave has become just a place where you take your girlfriend" (ibid; fieldnotes, July 8, 2000). But the debate continues. In October 2003, Caesar Zvayi¹⁴ renewed the call for the removal of Rhodes:

The Matopo Hills, which today are a tourist attraction (...) were a very sacred shrine in the pre-colonial halcyon days and believed to be the earthly residence of God and his high priests and priestesses (...) Today [the site] has been desecrated as the burial place of a white bandit, who was rabidly racist (...) Can the powers that be

¹³ The Zimbabwe National Liberation War Veterans' Association (ZNLWVA) is a nationwide organization, which represents both former ZIPRA and ZANLA guerrillas. While some of the occupiers on the farms – or their leaders – are veterans from the liberation struggle, other "war vets" are far too young to have taken part in the war. According to McGregor, the war veterans played a crucial role in the farm invasions; they gave the occupations a populist flavor and portrayed them "as part of a continuing struggle of liberation against the forces of imperialism, and in hiding the role of the army and intelligence services" (2002, 10). Thus, the government-backed farm occupations became known as the *Third Chimurenga*, inspired by the struggles in the 1890's and 1970's.

¹⁴ Caesar Zvayi is a regular pro-ZANU-PF columnist in the major state daily newspaper, The Herald.

please do something about this sacrilege and mollify the spirits of the land (Zvayi 2003, cit. Ranger 2003).

We can thus see the amount of symbolic investment that goes into making claims of belonging to land, both black and white. We can see how certain sites and broader landscapes become mnemotopes, through which the past may be recalled and told. Places and their stories may be regarded as mnemonic devices to recall a shared history and to act as moral guides. With words, with narratives, certain slices of the physical environment are made meaningful, explanatory of how *we* are woven into a relationship with the surrounding world. The Matopos constitutes a physical landscape, which is relatively durable. In such presence, the hills invite, like Anna Bohlin argues for District Six in Cape Town,¹⁵ “people to engage in discourses and practices of remembering” (1998, 171). According to Bohlin, District Six seems to be undergoing what Kopytoff (1986, cit. Bohlin 1998, 172) refers to as a process of singularization whereby an object or, as in this case, a particular landscape, is singled out and removed from the sphere of everyday exchange and commerce, acquiring a status as unique and non-exchangeable icon. The symbolic healing power, which Bohlin argues is ascribed to District Six, corresponds to the Matopos in the ex-Rhodesian memory. Through such sites, through preserving or attempting to preserve their material immutability, one attempts to organize and control one’s place in the world, to make it understandable and perceivable.

Some places – such as the Matopos – come to have more cultural gravity than others in the diasporic construction of homeland. In the cultural scheme, Matopos is composed as a momentous heroic landscape. The hills are a site of rooting white Rhodesians into the African rock through symbolic descent from Rhodes as the ancestor deity of colonial Rhodesia. The engraving of Rhodes into the landscape of his choosing is further enhanced by the enduring spiritual and material contestation encompassing the location. The canonical narration – even sacralization – of particulars sites, the concrete transportation of these places in images and mementos and pieces of rock, as well as their transportation and circulation in narrative, suggest a profound significance laid on place in diaspora. The remembering and retelling of those places is formative for

¹⁵ The suburb of District Six was a cosmopolitan multi-racial area in central Cape Town. In 1966, it was – according to the Group Areas Act of 1950 – declared a “whites only” area. The inhabitants were forcibly removed and buildings bulldozed down. The intents to build houses for whites never materialized, and, except for a few churches and mosques, the vast area now stands vacant. The District Six Museum, set up by former residents of the area, was opened in 1989. Along with Robben Island, it has become the symbol of South Africa’s violent past and the ambiguity of remembering. The area and particularly the museum have since then also become a topic of pronounced academic interest (Bohlin 1998; see also De Kok 1999, McEachern 1998).

belonging to the ex-Rhodesian community. The fact that landscapes have a symbolic, commemorative dimension, conveying culturally constructed meanings and messages, is one of the central points Maurice Halbwachs (1992) presents in his classical work on social memory. Somehow these meanings and messages seem to become more audible in diaspora. Canonized places, such as the Matopos, are held onto by reinscribing their significance over and over again. Terence Ranger (1999b, 11) writes that in 1980, when so many Rhodesians left Bulawayo and Matabeleland to go into exile in South Africa, they often took with them a watercolor of the Matopos to remind them of what they had lost. This is true, but I would argue that the watercolors on the walls were not merely reminders of loss. They were rather reminders of a sense of spiritual affinity with the land, commemorations of a sense of home. The ex-Rhodesians took with them watercolors and various other images and keepsakes to preserve and to transport and to create a sense of belonging. To hold the place. Telling about places, sculpturing sites with words, is about belonging both to the social and physical locale of the past as it is about belonging to a community of present within which it is possible to share these memories.

Introduction

In this section, I will discuss how past places of belonging are remembered in diaspora. To understand the remembering and narration of places requires that the process be situated in its social contexts. In the ex-Rhodesian memory-work, the remembered places are those of colonial Rhodesia. It forms the cultural and political context, the discourses of which affected – and were in turn affected by – the way landscape was perceived, conceptualized and known about. Secondly, the context for narrating these memories of place is the exile location. Thus, it is significant that the remembering is never practiced in a vacuum; people remember in specific political and historical locations. The sacralization¹⁶ of particular places, which in a way are lost to the people remembering them, needs to be considered in the light of the articulated debate that brings landscape to the fore in the Zimbabwean political arena. Furthermore, in the present location, in contemporary South Africa, issues of rightful belonging in land and place, of landlessness and placelessness, are of tremendous significance.¹⁷ It is significant, however, that the diasporic sense of homeland

¹⁶ Sacralized, rather than sacred *per se*, stresses the active and processual human involvement in which landscape is invested with cultural meanings.

¹⁷ Since the Land Restitution Act in 1994, Africans dispossessed of their land during the Apartheid years, have been able to claim back land or be compensated for the loss. The process of land claims is an issue constantly on the political agenda and covered in media in many ways. Cherryl Walker (1999), the then KwaZulu-Natal Land Claims Commissioner, analyzes what she refers to as master narrative in the land claims. It is a narrative of harmonious existence

and the politics of territorial belonging are addressed on an order which is distinct from, albeit integral to, the very real and deeply concerning politics of landownership in contemporary Zimbabwe.

As the Matopos case indicates, landscape can be conceived of as telling the story of predecessors whose moves and maneuvers have in part shaped and formed it. One is connected to its heroic gravity through moving along its paths and by inhabiting its places, through being involved and engaged with it, as well as through knowing the stories connected to those places. Cultural practices, memories, symbolic and material human engagements in and with the milieu socially form a landscape. Such a conceptualization conveys a dwelling perspective to landscape. Heidegger's (1975) concept of dwelling refers to the way human beings are in the world. In relation to landscape, to dwell suggests knowledge of landscape, which is gained from and grounded in nursing and nurturing the things that grow and in constructing things that do not grow (Ingold 1993, 151).¹⁸ Dwelling refers to the creation of meaningful locations, which form the surrounding world. Let me use Heidegger's own example to demonstrate this. He talks about the bridge as a construction:

The location [where the bridge is constructed] is not already there before the bridge is. Before the bridge stands, there are of course many spots along the stream that can be occupied by something. One of them proves to be a location, and does so *because of the bridge*. Thus the bridge does not first come to a location to stand in it; rather, a location comes into existence only by virtue of the bridge (1975, 154).

Dwelling perspective to landscape requires knowledge of land, which is constitutive of emplacement and engagement. In this view, people's relationships to the world are motivated by care and concern. It is knowledge of land, which now in exile can only be shared by those who also *once dwelled* there. But what happens when the landscape once dwelled in and known through everyday engagements no longer consists of lived-in places but remembered places? When landscapes are remembered from a spatial and temporal distance, they, on one hand, tend to become thickly-worded, quite unlike they are known through everyday experience. On the other hand they become thinner. Through telling, the repertoire of landmarks – vistas, events, and incidents used as mnemonic tools in remembering places – seems to become more condensed. When the landscape cannot be dwelled in but in memory, its representations often approach what

with neighbors and nature prior to white land politics in which 87 % of the land was owned by 15 % of the population. The master narrative is a story of dispossession, which continues to manifest itself in people's land claims, documents and memories.

¹⁸ See also Tilley 1996, Moore 1998a and 1998b, and Gray 1999 for similar perspectives.

seems like a pre-ordered series of snapshots, which circulate in the various conversations within the community. Or they may be lengthier narratives, the similar forms and contents of which build up a circulating discourse of landscapes and locations.

Hence, the remembering of landscapes from afar has a tendency to reproduce them in a singular image: in the Rhodesian imagery as “wide open space” or as “bush.” In that way the individual memories of particular places may become socially shared. The particularities of a special place in the bush may be shared with others when what is remembered and narrated has enough of a resemblance to touch the memories of others. How does this singularization happen? Christopher Tilley makes a significant point in regard to the layering or building up of knowledge of landscape gained through corporeal engagement. “Knowledge of particular locales previously encountered set up structures of expectation and feeling affecting the interpretation and ‘reading of others’” (1996, 162). If we consider Tilley’s basic idea of cultural competence regarding spatiality, we can see how this enables people to discuss *bush* although each discussant may have experienced and may have in mind a unique piece of the *Wilds*. Those who know, recognize *a bush* as similar enough to fit the cultural category of *the bush*. Understanding the complexity of landscapes through lived experience means that we have to pay attention both to knowledge gained through corporeal experience and to the cultural categorizations and representations of such experience in ways which make them socially sharable.

In this section I focus on two narratives, which I then contextualize and analyze. Both of the narratives I present as examples sketch loved and longed-for places in the bush. They demonstrate a similar yearning for an intimately known and experienced place in “wilderness.” This bush or wilderness in ex-Rhodesian narratives of place is constantly juxtaposed with what it is not, i.e., town, stitched-up country, modernity, and so forth. My intention is to open up these cultural dichotomizations and delve into the layers of their production. Significantly, these reflections on bush are made from a diasporic position. This bush is a place that may be returned to mostly in memory and imagination. However, David and Norman, whose narratives I present, also keep concretely returning and re-returning to their coveted places. Viewing and wandering in these memorable places – or just recalling their features – arouses feelings of deep care and a sense of reconnection in the place where one belongs. Both David and Norman claim a passionate longing for a place intertwined with a sense that the place is calling you; the place is longing for your presence as well. This sense of place inheres a powerful feeling, which both David and Norman so strongly emphasize – the pull of the land.

1. A PLACE IN THE BUSH

“The Mountains Had Lost None of their Presence”

David was born in 1948 in Salisbury. His father's family was “pioneer stock” in Rhodesia, descendants of the 1820 pioneers to South Africa. His mother had come to Rhodesia in the 1940's. “She never really lost her Englishness,” David said, “She remained very English.”¹⁹ From Salisbury David's family moved to a farm situated on the eastern border of Zimbabwe in the 1950's. This borderland area around Inyanga²⁰ is a rugged, pine-covered territory crisscrossed by rivers and creeks. Together with the Matopos Mountains near Bulawayo, they were perhaps the two areas that most frequently came up in my discussions with the ex-Rhodesians as exemplary epitomes of natural, majestic beauty of landscape. Unlike Matopos with its sturdy, arid terrain and topography dominated by spectacular boulders balancing carefully on each other's shoulders, Inyanga is often described as beautiful in a pleasant European-kind-of-a-way. Inyanga, is said to be “like Scotland” (Susanna), or an area “where it's cold in the winter but cool in the summer” and “where the landscape was lovely with beautiful walks” (Jim).

Inyanga was one of the favored “out-in-the-open” areas for white Rhodesians. Families traveled there for weekends to enjoy trout fishing and hiking. A tourist brochure, which, judging by the way people are dressed in the photographs, most probably dates from the late 1960's or early 1970's, entices visitors to the area:

Here the eye moves naturally to the horizon-wide vistas of mountain, green forest and plain, and the clear air encourages even the armchair habitué to stroll along winding footpaths and through fragrant pine forests. The mountains here give birth to a thousand streamlets, which combine to form rushing rivers, cascading spectacularly into deep valleys. In these clear rivers the wily trout lie, a worthy challenge to the skill of the fly-fisherman (Rhodesia's Inyanga Mountains. A tourist brochure, n.d.).

Inyanga is represented as an example of the picturesque in contrast to the sublime beauty of the Matopos. According to J. M. Coetzee (1988, 52), the beautiful, the sublime and the picturesque were in the 18th and 19th

¹⁹ David's mother, like so many others, always used to speak of England as home. This changed only when, after many, many years in Rhodesia, she went back to England to attend her father's funeral. “And she found the country had changed from the country she remembered when she was young. And since she came back, from then on I think she had decided that this was where she belonged” (David).

²⁰ The colonial name Inyanga was changed into Nyanga after Zimbabwe's independence in 1980. I use the colonial version here because that is the name used by my informants.

centuries the three categories in which specimens of European landscape were classified, and which remained so fundamental that they organized the way landscape was seen.²¹ Following Coetzee, it may be argued that the pleasantness of the landscape evoked by this description lies in its being a prime example in the tradition of Italian landscape art, later envisaged in English natural poetry and landscape gardening. Coetzee notes, borrowing from William Gilpin, that the “[I]deally picturesque view (...) contained distant mountains, a lake in the middle distance, and a foreground of rocks, woods, broken ground, cascades or ruins, this foreground to be characterized by “force and richness, by “roughness” of texture, in contrast to the “tenderness” of the middle ground” (1988, 39-40).

David's family's borderland farm was situated in what was called the Old Dutch Settlement Area. He recalls that Cecil Rhodes granted the area for Afrikaners who “came up [from South Africa] in the sort of various treks and pioneer column and that.” According to David, farming in the area wasn't very successful, and few of the early farms had survived. His family's ranch consisted of five little farms joined together. On this ranch they had mainly cattle, but also maize, cotton and wheat, none of which turned out to be very successful. The land his father chose to settle on was not very productive. The soil was poor, rainfall was unreliable, droughts recurrent, and hyenas once killed all the cattle. After a few years of struggling, David's father left the farm to work elsewhere to be able to support the family, leaving his wife and children behind to tend to the farm. During the war years of the 1970's, the area became a virtual war zone. Of the four white neighbors David mentions in our discussion – two single men and one elderly couple – three were killed. The roads were regularly mined and the cattle stolen. Eventually the family had to abandon the farm. David had recently been back to his childhood home for the first time in more than twenty years. In the meantime, the family farm had become a resettlement area. In a newspaper article, which David had written about the visit, he contemplates his return to the farm:

There were even fewer ruins than I had expected. The once solid stone walls of the house had been reduced to a series of random bumps and breaks, weed-ridden and obscured by mats of tangled foliage. The house timbers and roofing had either been rifled or destroyed by bush fires for there was no trace of them. The only thing which had not, so far as I could see, been completely humbled by the destructive elements (some of them obviously human) was the living room fireplace, traditional hearth of the home, which

²¹ See also Thacker (1979) for a discussion how these categories defined the construction of gardens in England. Edmund Burke (cit. Vest 1987, 313) defined sublime as an emotional mix between terror and delight produced by encountering an infinite object.

continued to haunt the landscape – a lonely beacon to the fragile, brief life we had created there.

In our discussion, David explains the blurred and mixed feelings he had about his recent visit. He tells about his childhood on the farm, about the significance of the landscape, particularly the mountains surrounding the farm, and about his intense longing for the place.²²

1. (The farm) was very isolated. And it was quite a distance from Inyanga, which is the nearest settlement. It was bad roads. There were no proper bridges; you just drift though the water, through the rivers. I spent all my time exploring, 'cause it was a very interesting area. And I used to spend all the time in the mountains (...)

2. We always used to call it the Raingod Mountain. And there was a legend that whenever there was a cloud in the sky, there would always be one over this. 'Cause they used to have these important rainmaking ceremonies there. It was also this belief that whenever a chief was crowned from the local (---) And they used to sort of leave him up this hill or something. Some story.

3. And there's a guy and he used to have to go up there and make various offerings and if the gods were impressed they used to give rain. My one brother actually (...) he went farming. But just recently, he's sort of lost interest in farming, and he's just become fascinated by all sort of archaeology and all the belief systems and all that up there. And he's done a lot of research into this. He knows a lot more than I do.

4. We only used to hear about, because there was all these signs of this sort of ancient civilization. There was all these terraces and built structures and it covers an incredible area. All these mountains, all the way up. They're all terraced (...)

5. My father picked up a lot just from talking with the locals. And then I read books and that on it as well (...) I was always quite interested in it. There were some very imposing mountains, quite a stupendous view. And our house was a bit further along. But there was also another quite a much bigger mountain, (---) which our farm was named after, named (---) I think it means a place of shouting.

6. ["What was it like to go back after twenty years?" I asked.] It was a sort of mixture of feelings. You know, there was a sort of sadness for what it was, what had gone, and yet it was very nice to be back.

²² David's and Norman's narratives I present here are from transcribed interviews. The parentheses (...) indicate places where some repetition has been left out.

It hadn't really changed. I think that was a nice thing. You know, it was now a resettlement area. It was no longer a farm. But the mountains had lost none of their presence.

7. ["But people had moved in," I comment.] Yeah, it was now very settled. In that point of view it had changed a great deal (...) Things had been done in there, from that point of view. It was a very isolated area, because there was just a very small white community. And in a way I sort of felt that it was right that this land, which had great religious significance to the locals, should actually have been given back to them. The sad thing was that all the actual blacks they brought in were actually not from the local tribes. They were from outside areas. And the local belief systems meant very little to them. So from that point I think it's a bit sad, you know. When we gave it over, I sort of liked to think it was to be handed over to the rightful occupants and to the people who, you know, to whom this mountain was so important. Wish they had got back their land.

8. The landscape (...) just has a very sort of powerful spiritual feel about it. I just have this sort of emotional connection with it. I don't really feel down here with the land. I seem to be drawn back. Inyanga, it's a very sort of mystical area. It's very powerful (...)

9. As I'm getting older, I'm sort of harking back more and more for, I don't know, for Zimbabwe. I seem to be going back more and more often. I think it's the pull of the land, I suppose. I've never quite got over that part of it. You know I really love the country. The country itself. I never much cared for the society. I made do with the society but I really loved the actual country itself.

10. My sisters go back with me too. We always go back, we will make this pilgrimage back to the farm. They also feel the very strong pull (...) But as I said, in more recent years I find myself harking back more and more for that. Like my life's gone a circle in a way, and I'm sort of going back to beginning.

In the first paragraph of his narrative, David frames the setting, the landscape where the farm was situated. The setting is both the scene and the stage of his story, but it is not only that. The place in David's narrative also forms its substance. The mountainous terrain is a landscape invested with cultural meanings, imagination and activity. "The farm was very isolated," David begins his story. These beginning lines are the first strokes, the prelude to the story, where David introduces the most significant themes of the narrative: isolation, solitude, wilderness versus modernity, and his individual engagement with the land. The opening immediately sets the tune of the narrative. In it one faintly hears the beginning of many other stories of a white farm in Africa, where isolation, solitude, loneliness and

the vastness of the surrounding nature are so intensely stressed.²³ David maps out the isolation by describing the difficulties of reaching the site of the farm. The roads were bad and bridges not proper. By these words, the farm seems to be situated in a pioneering a-historic timeframe and the pioneer genre of conceptualizing landscape. The obstacles to travel seem to distance the farm from modernity.

From the second paragraph until the sixth, David talks about knowledge. This is knowledge of the locality, which is not so much an outcome of his explorations and wanderings on the mountains – thus about his perceptual engagement with the landscape – as it is of his knowledge of meanings that local African people give to the mountains. He speaks of the spiritual significance of landscape, the mythical meanings of mountains, and of the remains of an ancient civilization. In his article he writes about the mountains:

The mountain range which ran along our eastern boundary was shrouded in legend and was dominated by Mount Muozi, a steep, semidetached peak attached to the main Nyanga plateau by a narrow saddle, which played a pivotal role in the local belief system. In an area where every stream, knoll, rock, cranny, glade, cleft and grove seemed to have its own special spiritual connection, it was the big daddy of them all, the epicenter of an important rain-making cult, a mountain whose significance extended way beyond the mere physical. To the locals, it was a gateway to another dimension, a bridge between past, present and future.²⁴

²³ Examples of white farming novels set in Africa are numerous. One is immediately reminded of Doris Lessing in Rhodesia and Elspeth Huxley in Kenya, both of whom grew up on farms in Africa and wrote both autobiographical and fictional novels, many of which are written from a lonely child's point of view. This is where the similarities end, however. Huxley and Lessing read very different meanings into the experienced isolation of a farming life. For Huxley, the wide open spaces surrounding one on the farm were about opportunity, they called for initiative and development. (See Huxley's trilogy 1981, 1982, 1987.) For Lessing on the other hand, the isolation of farming life is profoundly ambiguous and cannot be considered outside of her general frame of social insulation, which is seclusion both of an individual who cannot belong to the community and of a nation cocooned in itself. (See e.g., *Martha Quest* (1973 [1952]), the first volume of *Children of Violence* series, and the short story *The Old Chief Mshlanga* in *Collected African Stories*, 1979 [1973].) For a discussion of the farm novel in South Africa, see Coetzee 1988, chapters 3-6 in particular.

²⁴ According to Paul Mupira (2003), the VaNyama people use the ancient ruin on Chitsanza Hill, which is associated with agricultural terracing, for rain-making ceremonies. The most sacred place for the VaNyama people, however, is Mt Muozi. The name Muozi is derived from a very powerful diviner and rainmaker of the VaNyama. According to a legend, Mupira writes, the Sawunyama chiefs used to be installed on the mountain and anybody who

This is landscape understood in a sense Tim Ingold (1993, 152) emphasizes; that is, landscape as an enduring record of lives and works of past generations who in dwelling within the landscape have left something of themselves in it. What is significant, however, is the fact that in retelling the mythical message of the landscape, David seems to be creating a bond with the mountains via knowledge of other people's cosmology. Thus, his belonging to the locality travels curious paths. The mountains are made meaningful from a postcolonial diasporic position grounded on their spiritual significance to Africans from pre- to postcolonial.

The ambiguity of this position is further emphasized from paragraph six onward. In his article David's focus was laid, on the one hand, on the mixture of feelings that seeing the ruins of his home evoked, and, on the other hand, on what he calls the unchanged presence of the mountains. Despite the melancholy tone, "sadness for what it was, what had gone" (paragraph six), he reiterates the presence, solidity and eternity of the mountains. He takes comfort in their firm, physical presence. Because I annoyingly insist on change, David consents and elaborates on what had changed, that is, that the previously isolated area had become resettled and more densely populated. At the end of that paragraph, David makes a political statement, which in the current political situation – when the farm invasions had recently intensified markedly – was quite unique. David's statement is grounded in a sense of land, which was not common in the ex-Rhodesian discourse: he felt that the land, *because of its spiritual significance*, should have been given over to its *rightful occupants*.

In the coda, David returns to the spiritual significance of the landscape. He connects the longing for land, its call, to the spiritual feel of the landscape. The mysticism and power of the place that David emphasizes is grounded in his understanding and interpretation of the significance landscape has in the indigenous belief systems. Thus, David seems to authenticate his own connection with the land by invoking meanings local African people give to their landscapes, meanings that he now, from the diasporic position, may come to share. He senses an emotional connection with the landscape, quite unlike he does in South Africa

The sacredness of the landscape is specified in paragraph nine, where he expresses his longing for "the country itself." Here David's *country* is set in an antithetical position against the society. The love of the country is love of the land. A cord is woven between the here and there and the then and now, and he senses the pull of the land. The cord embraces not

wanted to become chief had to climb the mountain and be ceremoniously accepted or rejected by the spirits. Eventually Muozi became so popular and powerful that paramount chief Sawunyama felt threatened and had his army kill Muozi, which subsequently brought a curse on the land and the Sawunyama chieftainship. Numerous droughts followed until Sawunyama managed to appease the avenging spirit. Since then appeasement ceremonies have been held on Mt Muozi to prevent misfortune befalling the VaNyama people.

only him, but his family as well. This is emphasized in his will to make a *pilgrimage* to the place with his sisters.²⁵ According to Victor Turner (1996 [1974], 166), pilgrimages are liminal phenomena, the social relationships of which exhibit a quality of *communitas*. Although David's pilgrimage was not orthodoxically of a religious kind, his return back to the ruins of his home does resonate with the Turnerian notion. Leaving behind his secular ordinary life in South Africa, where he does not "feel with the land," he travels to the lost homeland and to the random remains of his childhood home. It is a liminal zone of a sort, for in the intensity of the moment, the time past and the time present seem to flow into one another, creating a sense of being there and then in the here and now. He returns to his ordinary life with a sense of some transformation; he feels that his life has "gone a circle" and he's "back in the beginning." Thus the sacred journey to the ruins connotes with the search for the self. It is in the homeland and in the homeplace, preferably in the company of one's family whose memories of the place resonate with one's own, and whose memories serve as reminders of one's own, where one may feel one most belongs.²⁶

Following Aristotle, Paul Ricoeur (2004, 25) distinguishes between *mneme* and *anamnesis*, the simple memory and the recollection. In David's family pilgrimage, remembering takes the mode of active search, recollection. Evoking the past together with family signifies a "returning to, retaking, recovering what had earlier been seen, experienced or learned" (ibid., 27). Through the shared remembering of a place whose past is meaningful only for those who have lived within, kin and land are tied together. It is symbolically significant that the only element remaining of his childhood home, the only thing that marked his family's involvement in the landscape, was the living-room fireplace, "the traditional hearth of

²⁵ Simon Coleman and John Eade (2004, 6) discuss the concept of pilgrimage as it connotes experiences of mobility and displacement in the world today. They do not claim that pilgrimage "can be used as an all-purpose metaphor for 'our times'" but explore the fact that in many parts of the world certain forms of travel are labeled as pilgrimage by their participants. See also Karen Armstrong's (2004) discussion on the Karelian evacuees repeated returns as kinds of pilgrimage and Paul Basu's (2004 and 2001) discussion in the case of Scottish diaspora journeys back to the "ancestral land."

²⁶ The Flame Lily Foundation (the Rhodesian Association in South Africa) regularly offered pilgrimage tours for ex-Rhodesians to "make a homecoming," in order for them "to link up with their past." A *Rediscovery Tour* was intended for people who were born after the UDI, and whose personal memories of the country, as well as their sense of rootedness seemed to require strengthening: "We are offering you a unique opportunity to visit the land of your birth, not so much as a tourist but as one rediscovering your roots. You will have the opportunity (...) to visit historical places that form part of your heritage (...) But we don't want you to feel like a tourist. We would prefer you to enjoy the emotion of "going home" (Flame Lily Foundation Link-Up 96 Tours to Zimbabwe, 1996).

the home,” as David describes it. In discussing family memory, Maurice Halbwachs notes that within certain ancient and modern societies, the family, seen as rooted in the soil, was not distinguished from the house and land. For ancient Greeks and Romans the family was fused with the hearth:

The hearth is the symbol of sedentary life (...) It should be anchored in the land. Once anchored, one must not change its place (...) And the family is anchored in the soil like the altar itself (...) The idea of a domestic abode naturally arises. The family is attached to the hearth and the hearth is attached to the soil. Hence there arises a close relation between the soil and the family. This must be its permanent abode which it could not dream of leaving (Fustel de Coulanges 1908, 64f; cit. Halbwachs 1992, 63).

Thus, the lonely fireplace in the midst of random, weed-ridden bumps and breaks acts as a mnemonic device par excellence. In recognizing its familiarity, that which is past and gone is brought to presence. Emitting a sense of homeness, it ensures that the observers are still attached to the soil.

“The Land Is Calling”

Norman’s wife had been calling me to visit, urging me to talk to Norman for some while before we managed to set a date. “You really should talk to him, you know, because he grew up in the bush,” she would repeatedly state at every occasion we met. And surely, if a man can be said to represent the stereotypical “bush type,” that was Norman. Norman, who was approaching sixty, was big and bearded and bear-like. He was clad in the “Rhodesian national costume” – that is khaki or beige-colored shorts, *veldskoene*²⁷ with long striped socks and a t-shirt. Norman’s father came from South Africa. His father in turn had come to South Africa from England during the Boer War and stayed on. Norman’s father, who moved to Rhodesia in the 1930’s, was the only member of his family to emigrate. “There were four boys and one sister [in Norman’s father’s family]. And only my father went up there. He was the only one. He went up there and the rest stayed here. But I never found out why he went up. Knowing the country, I can see why he went up.”

Norman comes from a very large family. There were three children in his family when his mother died. His father then married a woman who also had three children. Norman’s father and his stepmother subsequently had another seven children. “So there was thirteen all together. So you didn’t need any friends or enemies. It’s magic!” The family used to live in a small white community in the countryside. Norman’s father worked as a foreman at a power station in this small town in the central part of the country, where the family had moved in 1945. The little white community,

²⁷ Leather shoes, affectionately known as “vellies.”

which developed around the newly constructed power station, “ended up about sixty houses all together in the middle of the bush. One club, about three stores.” After finishing school Norman had traveled far and wide. He first worked at a post office and then he tried farming:

I thought that'll be the life for me. I'll try farming. Goodness gracious! It was mixed with cattle, tobacco, maize, sunflowers, bean, you know, everything, all mixed farming. But I was just a farm assistant. I ended up fixing all the tractors; it was a 24-hour job. I realized there that you can't ever learn to be a farmer in a university. You have to be born. To think you're gonna go to the varsity and then: "I'm going to be a farmer!" Forget. You won't. You're not born with that vast knowledge. You might know what to do but you don't know when to do. (Norman)

Having given farming a try, Norman had moved around Rhodesia working for various power stations. In subsequent years he had driven a loading truck at Durban harbor in South Africa, picked fruit in Australia, worked at a salmon fishing boat in Canada and caught tropical fish in Malawi. “But,” Norman said, “I always used to get homesick.” From all of his journeys he always returned home, to this small town “in the middle of the bush.” “Having traveled the world I wouldn't give you anything for Europe. Or America. Or Canada. I'm an African!” he forcefully stated.

During our discussion, Norman kept emphasizing the particularity of his home place, which he felt was constantly calling him. When he reminisced about the place, his rather rough appearance seemed to melt. His spoke softly and tentatively, tenderly and persuasively.

1. And you spent your life just shooting at birds. I think I killed one. And just pure running around. You knew all the wild fruit, and there was lots there. Lots and lots of wild fruit. So you knew the seasons, you knew where to look. And there, there's a big river, fishing, 99% of your time was spent at the river (...)

2. The only restriction: supertime. The power station used to blow the hooter to tell everybody, you know, it's four o'clock. They used to blow this big siren hooter. And then you know everybody's going home. And this could be five, six, eight miles away. As soon as that was heard, we used to run home. Run through the bush.

3. So this place is always calling me (...) There's a river, a hill, normal hills, and you get the power station, the power line. And then the hill and all the houses are on the hill with the club on the top. The club you could see for miles.

4. But as far as you could see, it was bush. Just pure God's bush. Not this stupid plantation. Just God's bush.

5. We're gonna go back. I wanna go back now. It's calling me very much. Saying: "Come, come, come, come back!"

6. I don't know if you're ever gonna go there, but if you drive from Messina to Beitbridge and when you cross the bridge, you enter God's own country (...) And when you start climbing on the hills, you will see the baobabs and the green hills and then you'll know what I'm talking about. It's God's own country.

7. God made Africa and just to make it so everybody's happy, he made the top and the bottom the worst places to be. Whereas the middle he kept for himself (...) The middle of Africa God reserved for himself. And whenever I've had a garden, I've always left a space for God in the middle of the garden. With that piece of land God could do whatever He wished. Whatever He wished to grow in it would grow.

Like David, Norman also begins by setting the scene by describing a place in the bush. Here the landscape, the bush, is the active playground of a child. Through his illustration, one can imagine a bush busy with bare feet treading the ground, the brush swarming and twigs twisting and snapping. There is no calm of the river. Instead, there is splashing and jumping, screaming and laughing. His description is about remembering himself as a child who knows the bush through his doing things: running, shooting, fishing and picking fruit. The first two paragraphs of his narrative not only set the scene in the physical, natural environment; they also form a setting of a close-knit community.

In the first paragraph, Norman employs the generic "you": "You spent your life just shooting"; "you knew all the wild fruit"; "you knew the seasons." This "you" may be interpreted as a generalized "we," that is, I and other people. It is we the children, we who know the place, we who know the routine of the place. The cacophonous sounds of kids flocking and rushing through the vegetation are interrupted by a blow of the power station siren. Every day at the same hour it would tell everyone the time to run home. Thus, Norman's bush is a socialized forest. It is scheduled and ordered by a modern, repetitive timetable.

David and Norman's landscapes are both landscapes of childhood; their bush was the familiar playground they thoroughly knew. Consider Doris Lessing's text about a small white girl roaming about her father's farm in colonial Rhodesia. Unlike David and Norman, she questions the "familiarity" of the place and the knowledge of it; she doubts the possibility of belonging:

A white child, opening its eyes curiously on a sun-suffused landscape, a gaunt and violent landscape, might be supposed to accept it as her own, to take the msasa trees and the thorn trees as familiars, to feel her blood running free and responsive to the swing

of the seasons. This child could not see a msasa tree, or the thorn, for what they were. Her books held tales of alien fairies, her rivers ran slow and peaceful, and she knew the shape of the leaves of an ash or an oak, the names of the little creatures that lived in English streams, when the words 'the veld' meant strangeness, though she could remember nothing else. Because of this, for many years, it was the veld that seemed unreal; the sun was a foreign sun, and the wind spoke a strange language. (From the short story *The Old Chief Mshlanga* in *Collected African Stories*, 1979, 13.)

For Lessing's child the landscape she sensually encounters is foreign and unreal, although "she could remember nothing else." The sedimentation of knowledge, knowledge gained from living-in and knowledge gained at school or from emigrant parents, is fundamental to colonial experience. White colonial position is fought with ambiguity, all kinds of ambiguity of course, but significantly ambiguity in regard to levels and categories of knowledge, and the respective relevance given to such categories. Many of the people I worked with considered that knowledge of English streams and queens learned at Rhodesian schools had no relevance in their lives what so ever. This knowledge of a significant elsewhere – an elsewhere, however, where one might at times mythically "trace one's roots" – was always present in the emigrant colonial family.²⁸ It is in this kind of ambiguity where we must situate Lessing's text.²⁹ However, unlike for Doris Lessing, one senses no alienation from what one knows through experience in David and Norman's Rhodesian childhood landscapes. They know through involvement with the land. Both remember clearly walking and running around the bush, knowing every aspect of it. They know through doing things: running, walking, wandering, collecting berries, shooting birds and catching fish.

When David and Norman walk the bush as children, when David spends all his life wandering on the mountains, when Norman's life was just pure running around, they attach themselves to the land. This kind of wandering and running may be considered as the prerequisite of localized knowledge.³⁰ Wandering is a kind of movement, where people in a sense do

²⁸ David went to England for a year when he was in his twenties. He reflected on seeing the country: "[It was] like recognizing a part of myself. It was like going home in a way." Charles, whose grandfather had come to Rhodesia in 1896, and who regarded himself strongly and profoundly as a "native of Rhodesia", went to England as an 18-year-old to receive his military training. About England Charles says: "I would never like to live there, but I liked it. It was part of my heritage."

²⁹ The text can be located in the postcolonial critical literal genre, in which the colonial position of knowing is under deep scrutiny. (On seeing and "knowing" England, see Hall 1991 and Naipaul 1987.)

³⁰ Walking, Jessica Dubow (2001, 250) reminds us, is one of the central metaphors of a Western metaphysics. Located at the heart of Enlightenment

not move from one place to another: they are in the place while moving (cf., Casey 1996). The essence of this sort of mobility is grounded in the sense and experience of moving within the place, not towards a particular place. The places become constituted and meaningful in mobility. Sometimes the young boys might have had a shotgun with them. They might have shot the occasional guinea fowl, but that was not the point of wandering. Neither was catching fish necessarily the point of fishing. Stuart, for one, explains that fishing is “just being in nature.” Wandering and fishing, as ways of engaging with the environment, come to define the place and the way of life in and with which one may feel at home. By walking and inspecting, one is taking care of one’s own world. Knowing every inch is about knowing one’s place. One walks gathering the minutiae, which collected and combined together compose localized knowledge. Spatial practices such as wandering and fishing are constitutive in the meaning of place. David and Norman’s walking knowledge is knowledge, which need not, often times cannot, be properly verbalized. It is knowledge, which is sensually gained through lived experience. It is an awareness of place, which is fleeting and most often not self-conscious. It may be considered a footstep level view of place, rather than a perspective that captures the place as a whole. (See de Certeau 1988, chapter VII.)

Returning to Norman’s narrative, in the third paragraph he expresses the call of the place. He attempts to unearth the place by further description. Thus, he portrays a colonial small town set-up dominated economically, socially and visually by the power station but furnished with the communal center, the club. Having verbally painted the scene and placed the club on the top, Norman then looks at the scene he has re-created from that very top. What he sees now retrospectively and conclusively is a bush on a different level to that of his previous description of engagement with it. This is bush sacralized. It is *pure God’s bush*. It is bush as an untouched wilderness set in opposition with “this stupid plantation,” which he encounters in South Africa.

Norman then returns to the call of the land he brought up in the beginning of the third paragraph. He feels that the place is calling him. He feels that the land is actually speaking with a voice of its own. The place is saying: “Come, come, come, come back!” The sound of Norman’s speaking voice factually changes in this line. He is whispering in a tempting, begging voice. Norman attempts to make me, the listener, understand the power of the call. He wants me to sense the sacredness of the land. We can thus interpret Norman’s use of “you” in the first lines of his narrative from this

and Romantic discourse, knowledge and mobility are correlated. For Rousseau, the instructive value of the walk involves the way that slowed time and expanded space allow for the pleasure and power of observational curiosity. Dubow quotes Rousseau (1762, 411): “We travel not like messengers but like travellers. We do not think about departure and arrival but also the interval separating them. The trip itself is a pleasure to us.”

perspective. "You spent your life just shooting ... you knew all the wild fruit ... you knew the seasons ... you knew where to look," he says. This is a "you," which is directed at me. This is a "you," which incorporates both me and Norman. He involves me by giving me no alternative. Under his deep piercing stare, he convinces me that I too knew.

Norman describes the entry to the sacred land: "You drive from Messina to Beitbridge and when you cross the bridge,³¹ you enter God's own country." The mystery of this border was repeatedly expressed in a very similar sense. Crossing the bridge over Limpopo always seemed to bring into being a sense of home. For example, Colin, who worked in mining, recalls his return to Zimbabwe after a year or so in South Africa:

I went back into Rhodesia and I remember going through the border post, and I got through the border post and I said: "Ah, I'm back home again! And gee, this feels good!" Crossing Beit Bridge, through the border and then I got into Beitbridge, and I bought six beers and I got into my car and all right – back to Bulawayo! (Colin)

Although the terrain and the topography might not change dramatically at crossing the border, the physical border is given profound significance.³² The border post as such would probably be enough to demarcate lands with unique names and histories, but the fact that there is a bridge over a river to cross seems to make the crossing into an almost ritual entry into a sacred land. The border post, and more so the bridge over the river, create a transition – concrete and metaphorical – between two realms of being, two irreconcilable ways of life. In Norman's, and not only his, narrative, even the scenery seems to change after crossing the bridge. On the South African side of the border, the landscape is not even there; it is just mileage, something to get through as fast as possible. But after crossing the bridge, the color and texture of the landscape suddenly penetrate the senses. The pace, too, slows down; there is time to grab a beer. What is un-described, even unseen, on one side of the border, becomes green and fertile, hilly and peopled on the other side.³³ This is landscape with an animated character; its grass may sing, its soil may call.

Norman's re-returns are akin to pilgrimage in a way that they follow a preordained route and routine. Every time he goes back to Zimbabwe, he drives the same road from the border town of Beitbridge towards Masvingo:

³¹ Messina and Beitbridge are border towns and custom posts between South Africa and Zimbabwe. Beit Bridge, linking the two countries, was built in 1927-1929 across the Limpopo River.

³² For a discussion on border in relation to a sense of place, see Ryden 1993.

³³ Very often return-back-home-stories involve stopping by the roadside to offer lifts to Africans or to help them in other ways. These acts would be unheard-of in South Africa.

I don't know if you're ever gonna go there but when you travel up by road and you leave Beitbridge and you go towards Masvingo – we always know them by the old names³⁴ – about half way up you must look on the side of the road, very close, and there's the old strip roads that were built during the depression. And most of my life I spent riding down these. Even when I go back I stop, get out, go and walk in the bush and walk on them. (Norman)

I was time and again informed of an ingenuous Rhodesian invention, the strip roads – two parallel strips of concrete, bituminized stone or asphalt macadam laid on a dirt road.³⁵ In 1969, three sections of strip roads, which were no longer used as main roads, were declared national monuments (*Encyclopaedia Rhodesia* 1973, 346). It is on these preserved, monumentalized bits of road that Norman always stops to pace as he journeys back home. Norman's pacing on the strips of concrete meant for him a journey back to the place. As he walks, time collapses and the two landscapes, the past and the present, leak into one another. The present memorial site entices him to recall another. These bits of road act as mnemonic devices calling forth the memory of himself as he was when he spent most of his life "riding down these." The landscape of the memorial site intertwines the past and the present, generating a sense of being who one is though one's involvement in the landscape.

Intriguingly with these words – "you drive," "you enter," "you travel" – Norman also seems to involve me in the act of journey by giving me map-like directions to the place. He gives me driving instructions and describes the road to the cherished, venerable land; if I were to take this road and climb the hills, I would see, and then I, too, would know. The following lines affirm the constantly repeated idea in the ex-Rhodesian community: I could only understand the longing for place and the calling of place if I would see and experience it myself. And vice versa. If I were to see it, no words of explanation would be needed. I would understand because the place itself would speak to me. Thus spatial knowledge, the way it is conceptualized here, has to rest on individual perception, sensation and experience.

In the last paragraph, Norman explains the sacredness of wilderness. He explains what "God's own country" signifies. He speaks of "real Africa"

³⁴ In spite of the fact that Norman states that they know the Rhodesian towns and sites by their old names, he uses, perhaps for my benefit, the names used in independent Zimbabwe. Beitbridge has maintained its colonial name. Masvingo was called Fort Victoria during the Rhodesian colonial era.

³⁵ The building of the strip roads was begun during the depression in 1930's. In 1931 an Unemployment Relief Scheme, which employed Europeans on road works, was introduced. Strip roads continued to be laid until the end of the Second World War (*The Rhodesian Book of the Road* 1974, 8-9; see also *Focus on Rhodesia* 1978, 11; *Encyclopaedia Rhodesia* 1973, 310-312; 345-346).

– the middle – in contrast to the top and the bottom, which connote to North and South Africa respectively. On the last lines of his narrative he presents another dichotomy, that between garden and wilderness. Through his own practice, he digs this dichotomy into the ground. In his creation of a wild space in the middle of a garden Norman creates a sacred spot; he un-tames and lets free a part of the framed and manicured nature he otherwise so tenderly attends to. By this curious arrangement, Norman demonstrates an ambiguity of landscape, which is at the core in the settler conceptualization of wilderness: the idea that wide open spaces call for development, the outcome of which is the destruction of “nature,” which at its “pure and original” state is what many of the settlers came to look for and which is thus valuable in itself.

2. UNTANGLING THE BUSH

I shall now take a few essential themes that figure prominently in these narratives under closer scrutiny in order to contextualize them. I will examine what happens to the bush when it is shifted from the level of experience to that of the core narrative. I will endeavor to uncover what this longed-for and sacralized bush might be about, and try to untangle the cultural idea of wilderness. I will discuss the sometimes-ambiguous meanings wilderness is given in the “European” conceptualization and then move on to looking at the manifestations of the idea of wilderness in its colonial context. Both David and Norman locate the wilderness in particular, culturally configured dichotomizations: country versus society, bush versus plantation.

The Idea of Wilderness

The concept of wilderness – David’s *country* or Norman’s *bush* – seems to mix and merge complex and seemingly contradictory ideas. The very idea of wilderness, needless to say, is a cultural construct rather than a precise physical entity. The idea of the Wilds resonates strongly in the Judaeo-Christian tradition. According to J. M. Coetzee (1988, 49), the origins of the concept lie in pre-Israelite demonology, where wilderness was the realm beyond the reach of God. The second sense of wilderness developed in Judaeo-Christian theology, where wilderness was seen as a safe retreat, a place of contemplation and purification, a place where one’s true being could be discovered.

In discussing mythical narratives – ancient Greek and Roman in particular – which move through time and space from nature towards culture, Denis Cosgrove (1993, 282; 291) locates “wilderness” in the tripartite structure of “archetypal landscapes”: wilderness, garden and city. The archetypal landscapes imply a moral narrative about people’s intensifying interference with nature through an imagery of “Ages.” In Virgil’s natural cycle, for example, human societies are seen to move from pastoral via agricultural to urban existence, which eventually results in a return back to the state of pastoral wilderness (ibid, 291-293; see also Short 1991). According to this narrative, the golden age landscape that the first humans found was Edenic, it was naturally fertile and required no intervention by man to sustain life. This simplest social form was followed by agricultural life, which demanded the sweat of both humans and animals. Finally, in Virgil’s natural cycle, competition, trade and commerce, characteristic of urban life, are seen to lead into warfare, which is followed by destruction and eventual return to the primitive society and the state of wilderness. Thus, the temporal narrative moves through symbolic landscapes from the wilderness of pristine nature, through the pastoral and cultivated agrarian garden to the built-up city (Cosgrove 1993, 293).

The wilderness landscape, furthest removed from the city and civil life, is considered pre-social. It is the wild forest, the mountain, the desert-land and the waste; it is the home of the animal. However, wilderness in the cyclical narrative is also the prerequisite for society. All of the archetypal landscapes gain their significance in relationship to one another and may be ambiguously interpreted. While wilderness may be considered as a place of uncouth nature, it may also be honored and preserved (*ibid.*, 297-298).

Like Cosgrove, John Rennie Short (1991, xvi) situates wilderness in the classical tripartite divide: the city, the countryside and the wilderness. According to him, fear was the strongest element in European attitudes to wilderness until the 19th century. In fairytales and folklore demons and dangers dwelled in the forests and mountains. Mountains were seen as deformations of earth, as physical reminders of sin and ugliness.³⁶ Short considers that the fear of wilderness exists in most societies where a sky-centered religion has replaced an earth-bound animism. This fear comprehended both those who dwelled in the wilderness, as well as the effects wilderness had on individuals exposed to its influence. Short argues, however, that the fear has been replaced by the strengthening of a romantic vision of wilderness. By the early 19th century, mountains, for example, were regarded as symbols of divine force, as points of contact with the infinite (*ibid.*, 6-8; 16). Wilderness had become a symbol of lost innocence, a source of nostalgia for a golden age (*ibid.*, 10; see also Cosgrove 1993, 299).

In analyzing wilderness as solitude, Jay Vest, on the other hand, presents an argument, which claims that deism could be seen as the basis for the romantic appreciation of nature, which constitutes the sublime. He quotes Hans Huth (1957, 11), who considers that this new appreciation involved "a re-classification of those elements in nature, which hitherto had aroused fear as evidences of God's power" (Vest 1987, 321). Vest argues, however, that the aesthetic of the infinite, inherent in the notion of the sublime, predates the deism. He does not underline the element of fear in his analysis of the philosophical and etymological backgrounds of the concept of wilderness. "Wilderness," he writes, "literally connotes a metaphysical "will-of-the-land" in primal Indo-European thought" (1987, 305). Such a will can be taken to mean that wilderness is uncontrollable or ungoverned. Vest emphasizes, however, that

[T]he true meaning of "will-of-the-land" is intrinsic volition and value, free from human instrumentalism and control. A "will-of-the-

³⁶ David Evans, in his study of the history of nature conservation in Britain, quotes Joshua Poole, who in *The English Parnassus* of 1657 described forests as dreadful, gloomy, wild, uncouth, and melancholy. Evans sees this conceptualization of the forest to be part of the reason behind deforestation in Britain. "[T]he needs of industry continued to be appeased and that the new Tudor laws failed to stem forest decline" (1992, 17).

land" ascribes to wilderness a locus of value in itself. Recognizing this, primal Indo-Europeans set aside large reserves or tracts of land as sacred groves or wilderness sanctuaries. Wilderness, viewed in this way, suggests that the land has a divine purpose, that wilderness involves creation, and that wilderness confers an absolute recognition of intrinsic value (*ibid.*, 306).

Although Vest's and Short's argumentations are very different, they both emphasize the idea of wilderness as something regarded valuable in itself, rather than valuable in a sense of what it could be made into. Short situates the ennobling and romanticizing of wilderness in the fact that by the 19th century, Britain was one of the most urbanized countries in the world. Whereas in 1800, 25 % of the British population lived in urban areas, by the end of the 19th century 80 % were town dwellers (Evans 1992, 24). The changes in the British society caused by the industrial revolution were reflected in the images of a changing landscape. For those who regarded these changes as "a paradise lost," the idealized past was situated in the countryside – not in an uninhabited wilderness – loosely dated somewhere in the early 18th century. The disappearing yeomanry, according to Jean and John Comaroff (1991, 71-73), became the mythical embodiment of a traditional lifestyle, and the most tragic symptom of the era was the scarring of the England-as-garden. However, the image of England-as-garden – with its neatly-walled or hedged fields – was a consequence of the enclosure movement, the privatization of the commons and the commodification of agriculture, which had preceded and enabled industrialization and consequently caused the death of the yeomanry. Thus, the mourned for imaginary past merges two different historical periods: the so-called typical English scene of a tidy, geometric patchwork of green fields and one tilled mainly by yeoman households (*ibid.*, 322 n. 33; see also Short 1991, 67; Miller 1995, 94). In these nostalgic views, the city had become the moral equivalent of the medieval, demon-populated forest.

Colonial Wilderness

It is quite apparent, that this reverie for the mythical Wilds, and the keen interest in outdoor-life (and the hunting and sport that came with it), was very much an upper and middle class passion in Britain.³⁷ This enthusiasm for the Wilds, in addition to actualizing in various rambling movements,

³⁷ Indeed, Short refers to the reinforcement of the "Country ethic" as "Balmorality" (1991, 74). However, he also notes that the beginning of the 20th century also saw the emergence of different wilderness and rambling movements in Britain, some of which were explicitly socialist. They encouraged the opening up of the countryside for the benefit of the urban workers; the beauty of nature was seen as an encouragement to a simpler life and higher thinking (*Ibid.*, 77).

also materialized in the birth of natural history societies.³⁸ In the words of David Evans (1992, 31), the lone “sportsman-naturalist-collector” came to epitomize the 19th century. Such enthusiasms were intensively carried out to the tropics with imperial expansion. John MacKenzie (1990, 7-8), for one, investigates how deeply scientific ideas were embedded in the imperial rule. He argues that 19th century romanticism was closely bound up with the study of geology, botany and meteorology. “Every hunter was a zoologist and a reader of natural signs (...) walkers, beachcombers and travelers were paleontologists, ornithologists, geologists and botanists” (ibid., 5). David Livingstone, according to MacKenzie, was the “heroic paradigm of such a programme” (ibid., 6). Livingstone cast a scientist’s eye on everything that he saw on his Zambezi expedition, on which he was accompanied by an economic botanist, a geologist, a photographer and a cotton expert.³⁹ Similar tones can be found in Cecil Rhodes’ appropriations of Southern Africa. In 1870, in one of Rhodes’ earliest letters to his mother from Natal in South Africa, he enthuses about the many curiosities of the land:

High hills, and deep valleys, and sometimes, you will see no trees at all. What strikes you here most (...) is how very little cultivated the land is. You may go for miles and only see one or two patches of cultivated land. This is especially the case up country (...) [There are] a great many curiosities of all kinds out here, and I *intend to make a collection* ⁴⁰(Rotberg 1988, 40; my emphasis).

The fact that the Victorian wilderness movements and scientific interests, as well as the yearnings for a rural idyll in Britain, coincided with the colonial expansion is intriguing. It is often argued that in a colonial society the “old” past of the colonials – distant landscapes carried and carved into the “new” lands – influenced the way the conquered land was conceptualized. To be sure, colonial cultures – as homespun creations (Stoler 1989b, 136)

³⁸ The first nation-wide association to be concerned with all forms of wildlife, the Selbourne Society for the Protection of Birds, Plants and Pleasant Places, was founded in 1885. Its aims were “To preserve from unnecessary destruction such wild birds, animals, and plants that are harmless, beautiful or rare; to discourage the wearing and use for ornament of birds and their plumage, except when the birds are killed for food or reared for their plumage; to protect places and objects of interest or natural beauty from ill-treatment or destruction; to promote the study of natural history” (Evans 1992, 40; see also Frake 1996, 229).

³⁹ Mary Louise Pratt (1992) argues that the key moment in the assertion of a scientific, urban and male worldview can be dated to around 1760 with Linnaeus. William Beinart (1998), however, reads the early travelers to South Africa from a point of view different to that of Pratt. He suggests that Pratt exaggerated the degree to which these travelers depicted an “uninhabited” land.

⁴⁰ Rotberg, Rhodes’ biographer, notes that Rhodes never made the collection “since other priorities imposed themselves” (1988, 696, n. 3).

– did embrace fabrications of European images. Their meanings, however, have to be considered as particular to their colonial social orders. Colonial cultures were locally lived, and the localities shaped and challenged the straightforward planting of “Little Englands in the wilds” – a statement, which is too vague to do justice either to the social history of landownership and development of landscape in England as such, or to the distinctiveness of the colonial encounter with the African environment in particular.

The newly awakened global sensitivity to environmental problems has intensified research into environmental history and its relationship to colonial expansion. The rise of popular and government concern, according to Richard Grove (1995, 1-3), has resulted in a widespread belief that environmental anxiety is a brand new phenomenon and that conservation is a revolutionary program. He shows, however, that environmental concerns have a long history in both Western and non-Western thinking. He also argues convincingly that too little attention has been paid to the significance of the colonial experience in the formation of Western environmental thinking. Grove demonstrates how ideas of modern conservationism in fact developed through European encounters with the tropics and with indigenous classifications and interpretations of the natural world. He emphasizes that there has been very little account of the significance of the colonial experience as well as indigenous knowledge and philosophy in the formation of Western environmental attitudes and critiques. On the contrary, it is assumed that colonial responses to the tropical environment derived directly from metropolitan models.

Thus, one point that comes out strongly in studies of environmental history in Southern Africa⁴¹ – and which is largely lacking in studies of settler cultural conceptualization of land – is the impact of local, African, knowledge on the European ways of conceptualizing the environment. This, I think, is clearly demonstrated in David’s argumentation. His sense of land, in particular his sense of the spiritual significance of land, is grounded in his knowledge about local African meanings given to the landscape. Undoubtedly such knowledge is combined with environmental awareness, very topical in the South Africa of today. It is these layers of knowledge mingling with individual memories of engagement with particular locations that combine to build a sense of place.

⁴¹ The study of environmental history in Southern Africa has in recent years become a flourishing arena of debate. For a review of the discussion, see Donald Moore 1998a; for a global historical analysis, see Grove 1995, MacKenzie 1990, Griffiths and Robin 1997; for a focus on South Africa see Beinart and Coates 1995 and Beinart 1998. Very much connected to that discourse, Draper (1998), Carruthers (1995 & 1998) and Brooks (1999) examine debates on the cultural landscape of the game reserve in South Africa.

Open country?

Early pioneering descriptions about the encountered landscape did, more often than not, rely on making comparisons between Africa and England. Delight was found in resemblance, such as in the tourist brochure depictions of Inyanga as a “Highland landscape,” where instead of the blank openness of the *veld*,⁴² one encountered “vistas of mountain, green, forest and plain” and where one could “stroll along winding footpaths and through fragrant pine forests” (Rhodesia’s Inyanga Mountains. A tourist brochure). Errol Trzebinski writes of the pioneering days in Kenya in similar tones. Trzebinski muses on how Lord Delamere, whom she refers to as the Rhodes of Kenya, encountered the East African highland wilderness: “[T]he views that lay before them encompassed forest, lake, thicketed valley and green, moist grass where cattle might graze, evoking memories of a summer’s day in Europe” (1991, 28).

Significantly, the wide-open space of the frontier meant “free land” for the pioneers. To be sure, the idea of “free land” encompasses a whole set of social, economic and legal assumptions and connotations. According to Thompson and Lamar, who compare North American and Southern African frontiers, the most important aspect of land was its implication of ownership. “Free land (...) not only inspired aggressive expansion into indigenous areas for social and psychological reasons, it perpetuated hierarchical concepts of society and fostered forced labor systems on the so-called free frontiers of both North America and Southern Africa” (1981b, 30).⁴³ Jay Vest analyzes how the utilitarian foundation for Western land use ideals⁴⁴ – and thus the “European imperialist ethos” – is built on John Locke’s presocietal natural right and individualized ownership theory, in which a land without development or “improvement” is a lonely place. For the Puritans, the occupation of native land in America was justified by their concept of *vacuum domicilium* – a notion that a place is without human habitation or civilization and thus “lonely” or “desolate.” Lands, such as these, were seen as instrumentally valuable, worthy in what they could

⁴² *Veld* (Afrikaans) literally means a field. However, *veld* generally refers to the wide open rural landscapes of grass or low scrub of Southern Africa.

⁴³ Frederick Jackson Turner’s classic frontier hypothesis (1893) suggests that the concept of frontier is the most significant determinant of American character and institutions. Turner and his successors considered the American frontier experience as unique and incomparable, a source of America’s national distinctiveness. (See Thompson and Lamar 1981a, 4; Lowenthal 1997, 231; Beinart and Coates 1995, 8.)

⁴⁴ The conceptualization of land as possession is by no means particular solely to the frontier or the empire context. W. J. Keith in his analysis of land in Victorian literature states that “For many Victorians [‘land’] was automatically associated with conceptions of possession and, by extension, of power. A great estate presupposed a great man who owned it” (1981, 136).

offer. Fusing Locke's theory with a Puritan reading of Genesis 1:28,⁴⁵ the pioneers refused to see Native Americans as human (Vest 1987, 310).

On the colonial African continent, examples of that very same European conceptualization of land are overwhelming. For instance, W. H. Brown, in his pioneering account *On the South African Frontier* (1899, cit. Palmer 1977b, 16) writes:

With the Bantu, removal does not entail the same degree of hardship that we contemplate in the dispossession of land in civilized communities. The natives do not hold the soil in the same sense of ownership. To them the earth is as free as the air and the water, and to be used only in ministration to their immediate wants. The occupancy of any given plot of ground is but temporary.

The idea that wide-open spaces are something that call for development and offer opportunity, something that tickle the imagination as spaces of promise that can be ordered into something the eye is familiar with and finds comforting, is thus a central motif in white colonial views of wilderness.⁴⁶ Building on the land was about participation in the collective project of modernization. It was about civilizing the landscape by taming it. "Look, we were there only for 90 years and we built up the country from scratch," I was told time and again. An extract from an article published in the early 1970's condenses the story of civilizing the land:

We've been given some of nature's most bountiful assets, we've taken advantage of them and produced fruit. We've tamed the land, civilized it with our roads and railways, our medicine, schools and cities, mines and farms (Goodman 1971, 11).⁴⁷

⁴⁵ "God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground."

⁴⁶ In some accounts the "emptiness" is not considered an opportunity purely in a positive sense. A land without development may also implicate danger and maliciousness. Felix called this the *bundu* aspect. Felix talks about the *bundu* or the bush more metaphorically than most. He clearly connects the idea of dominating the environment to dominating the society. He speaks of Rhodesian politics being guided by this analogy of how the physical environment was encountered: "And yet always (...) you were told, you got the impression that you were a cut above in a way as well. We were Lords of our creation in a sense (...) It's a dominating thing. Unless you dominate the environment, it's gonna come at you. The sort of *bundu* aspect. It's around you." [*Bundu* is a word used in South African English. It signifies a wilderness region, remote from cities and derives from a shona word *bundo*, i.e., growing grass, thick growth of plants or shrubs.]

⁴⁷ This core narrative of development is very much collectively agreed upon. However, the article, which expressively employs arborescent metaphors, continues on a critical note. The author argues that white Rhodesians as "the foreign seed (...) will eventually wither and die" if it refuses to adapt to the

Civilizing and taming had also to do with making the landscape perceivable through familiarizing it, thus, in Trzebinski's words, giving the landscape a "geometric order in which the European eye delighted and found comfort and security" (1991, 28). Hence, perhaps the most common white settler master narrative is that of wilderness as an un-used *tabula rasa*, "ill-occupied by the idle savage." In settler colonial discourse, "wide open spaces," "vast horizons," "great spaces washed with sun" and other similar metaphoric phrases about landscape are in abundance. In the ancestor narrative, early Rhodesian landscape is represented as "a wide open space" or as "nothingness." The pioneers had "seen nothing" because they had seen nothing that could be interpreted as human involvement with the environment. The "nothingness" signified potential. In their mind's eye, in their hopes and dreams, the settlers imagined fields and houses, development and fortunes. Thus, the moral narrative about "making something out of nothing" is at the core of the ex-Rhodesian discourse, as well as in the case of postcolonial whites in Kenya whom I have discussed elsewhere (Uusihakala 1995a; 1998).

Very commonly, in the ex-Rhodesian vision of "open land as opportunity," the dichotomizations made are similar to those used by David and Norman: i.e., "country versus society" or "bush versus plantation." The meanings read into the polarization, however, are rather different. Elaine and Richard, an elderly couple, who intensely disliked their physically and financially volatile life in South Africa, subscribe to the theme of the "open country." Elaine and Richard's *open country* is the democratic (as regards the whites) wide-open space of opportunity. As a hobby, the couple used to prospect for minerals and gems in Rhodesia.

Elaine: I think even on the mining side we were different. [Compared to South Africa.] Up there anybody could go and get a license to prospect. And all the land belonged to the state. Yes, the mineral rights. So you went out and, all right, you tell her how you stake a claim.

Richard: What you did, you got a license and they gave you a nice little (---) licensed prospector, and you could go on anybody's land, subject to a written notice, registered, and send it to the farmer and you could prospect on his land for a month. Certain places you couldn't go, like into his *mielie*⁴⁸ crops and dip tanks and things like that, and obviously you went to see him first to get on good terms. And if you found something, [there was] a rigorous sort of pegging

African soil and continues to cut itself off from the indigenous population. Another problem the author foresees is that Rhodesians have likewise cut themselves completely off from the "mother tree", which has produced a national paranoia and the loss of self-criticism (Goodman 1971, 11).

⁴⁸ *Mielie* (Afrikaans) is maize or corn on the cob. Also *mealie*.

procedure, and then you registered it and you had to develop it or pay a penalty at the end of year (...) You used to get some funny people there. Used to get some funny prospectors up there. But it was wild, it was wild country. The thing was that *you felt as though the country belonged to you. It was my, it was my country.*

Elaine: The difference [is, that in South Africa] every bit of what have you, they've got a value. Either it belongs to the farmer, the mineral rights, or it belongs to a mining company. And it's all *stitched up*. There is no *open country* as such. No. That you could go along and just help yourself. (Elaine and Richard)

The wilderness as open country in opposition to the South African stitched-up one is thus conceived of as one of limitless potential, in which "you could go along and help yourself." The wilderness Richard emphasizes has to be interpreted from this perspective of potential, for the landscape he remembers and represents is hardly "wild" as in untouched. The land is regulated by ownership; it either belonged to the state or to private (white) farmers. The state regulated the prospecting by controlling and registering the prospectors and requiring the development of claims. The way Richard recasts the lands also dots it with human engagement; the *mielie* fields and the dip tanks on the farmer's property speak of a structured farmland. Moreover, the landscape is intertwined with social relationships; to be able to "help oneself" to the offerings of the land required social interaction; one needed to be in good terms with the farmer, who owned the plot. However, irrespective of these obvious elements of domestication or taming in the landscape, the country is presented as wild. In addition to opportunity, the limitlessness of space evokes a sense of individuality. The pioneering ideals of enterprise, individuality, freedom and opportunity, are, time and again, carved into the "open country." The wilderness of land seems to elicit a sense of possession, a feeling that "the country belonged to you."

The pioneer path through "open country"

But the fact that the land certainly was not devoid of human involvement even at the pioneers' arrival is also evident. Neither did the early travelers depict the land as empty as has often been suggested. On the contrary, human involvement was doubtlessly present in such narratives. Early travel accounts aimed at easing the journey of prospective pioneers describe in elaborate detail practical aspects of travel from the Cape Colony to the newly founded territory of Southern Rhodesia. One example of such a genre is a book called *From the Cape to Bulawayo*, published in 1896. From the South African port towns of Cape Town, Port Elizabeth and East

London, it was possible to take the train as far as to Mafeking (870 miles from Cape Town). From there onwards, one had to rely on coach, horse or mule cart, mule, bullock or donkey wagon, riding, walking, or bicycling to reach Bulawayo. The un-named author of the book, who calls himself "One who has done it," i.e. the 525-mile journey from Mafeking to Bulawayo, describes four alternative routes for the journey. Consider the following extract from "Route number one"⁴⁹:

Very heavy sand, the worst piece of road on the line. Stores and accommodation. No liquor; post and telegraph office; blacksmith; Customs office; outstation Bechuanaland Border Police; native town of chief Khama. Heavy sand all the way; about a mile beyond the town the road descends a long stony hill, which should be taken carefully. Sandy ground through bush and trees. Water obtained by digging in bed of river. There is a Post Station near Baobab tree half way, with water in pit dug by coach contractors.	Palapye
	Lotsani River
	Seruli River
Rough stony road after leaving Mangwe starting Eastwards through thick bush country and turning abruptly towards the North, gradually ascends the Pass, finally coming out on to high ground with extensive view of country to North and West and the endless Motopo Hills to East and North East. The road winds through the hills for some miles and during wet weather is heavy with black mud. Water during dry season can be obtained near most of the Post Stations, and at O'Brien's Store nine miles from Mangwe and near the Motola Hotel, 8 miles beyond O'Brien's. The road here is free from the hills and fairly good. Water in <i>spruit</i> [watercourse] near the road. Road runs over undulating open bush country, sloping to Westwards on the Zambesi watershed. Heavy black mud during rains; water in both rivers.	Shashi or Shashani River
	Fig Tree
	Bukutwani River
	Khama River
	Buluwayo

This text depicts geographical and man-made features of the landscape along the route from the perspective of how they facilitate or hinder travel and movement in an un-mapped territory. The document describes the seasonal variations regarding the passability of the road. It depicts landmarks that can be used for orientation, and it marks locations where

⁴⁹ Since I do not reproduce the description of the whole route, but merely an extract, I have, for the sake of clarity, omitted the mileage between the place names (on the column on the right) that are shown in the original book.

water and food can be obtained, places essential for the traveler's survival on the road. What is interesting is that the moral connotations attached to "openness," "emptiness," "namelessness" and "historylessness," so often linked with the pioneering accounts of experiencing the African landscape, are not the elements that characterize this text. On the contrary, it carefully lists local language names of rivers used as landmarks and as sources of water. The text also notes the names of the chiefs whose territories the roads were passing, in this section of the route, Chief Khama. Significantly, the document marks the concrete extensions of colonial rule to the ground: wells belonging to coach constructors, stores, hotels, post offices, border police, customs and the like. In short, it depicts a lived-in, historically contextualized landscape.

Such physically detailed and socially particularized descriptions of the landscape stand in certain contraposition to how Jean and John Comaroff, among others, discuss missionary writings on passages to the field in the Southern African landscape. "African landscape was presented [in the missionary writing] as virgin, devoid of society and history, waiting passively to be watered and tilled by evangelical effort. The texts [portrayed] the 'dark continent' as a vacant stage on which to enact a Promethean myth" (1991, 172). The Comaroffs continue to note that the journey from the coast to the interior became for the missionaries a certain rite of passage, the retelling of which lay in the belief that the author's passage was emblematic in itself and hence worthy of record. What explains this difference in the narrative accounts? Although the physical environment that the travelers' and the missionaries' paths crossed consisted of the same geographical features, the same desert and bush, the same rivers and *kopjes*,⁵⁰ the implications of the landmarks were different to different travelers. It seems that the missionary narrative and subsequent reminiscences of the pioneering era in general wipe the landscape open and clean of bodily experiencing and sensing of the terrain so evident in the travel narrative.

Thus, the following is a typical example of how the pioneer route is narrated in later white Rhodesian accounts of the country's colonial beginnings.⁵¹

The route chosen for the 1890 Pioneer column was over difficult country, with thick bush and forests cut by *many rivers*. A road had to be hacked to get the wagons through, and over *each sandy river bed* a track had to be laid with tree trunks. At *the larger rivers*, where the water was too deep, the wagons were unloaded. The oxen

⁵⁰ *Kopje* (Afrikaans) is a small hill, knob, or ridge that rises from the surrounding plain. These granite boulders are technically known as inselbergs.

⁵¹ The route from Mafeking to Bulawayo, described in the traveler's narrative cited above, is not the road the Pioneer column proceeded on. The geographical landscape and the means of travel described in the accounts are, however, similar enough to allow for simultaneous reading.

swam over and the men carried the goods across and re-loaded the wagons of the farther side – a long and tedious process with 117 wagons to be dealt with. But remorselessly the trek went on, and each night saw them a few miles nearer their destination (Great Spaces Washed with Sun 1967, 10; my italics).

Whereas the first traveler's narrative is a description of what was there, the above narrative is more a depiction of what was lacking, i.e., proper roads and bridges. The focus is laid on the trek itself as well as on the prominence of the destination looming in the horizon. It is direction and speed that define the journey. Thus, rather than being about physical terrain, this text is about landscape woven into a story of a mission. In this sense it is also closer to the Comaroffs' analysis of the missionary representations. If the "Route number one"-text is a first-hand account offering journeying information, the second one is retrospection on the journey. By the time of its writing, in the latter half of 1960's, the pioneer journey had become very firmly structured by conventions of settler narrative. It had become a mythical origin story.

In the first account, the reader can sense the rhythm of the movement, its percussion on the ground. The latter account is stripped down. The journey has become a *trek*, which is originally a Dutch word meaning an *organized migration* of people. In the transformation of the landscape story into an origin story, the bush, the forest and the rivers are moved to the background. They constitute an un-named and undefined setting: a scenery of obstacles against which the core action can be played out. In a sense, this journey takes place in a blank space. The "thick bush and forest" and "each sandy river to be crossed" could be any bush, forest or river. Hence, in re-telling the landscape, it is de-decorated. There are two implications of this erasing and suppressing of the natural landscape. First of all, it seems that as the rivers and bush and piles of stones become more familiar, when they become individually paced out, seen, smelled and felt, they no longer seem to require meticulous description. For those who have shared the landscape, small allusions are assumed to be adequate to provoke sense and emotion and to call forth individual memories of engagement with the milieu.

On the other hand, the landscape in the retrospections of the pioneer path is a resounding of a shared history. The rivers, hills and balancing stones spell out a moral landscape transmitting messages about the ancestors' participation in its creation and concomitantly about personal indebtedness to such legacies. Accordingly, if the first extract is a route story, the pioneer retrospection is a root story. It connotes the beginning of the place as well as the beginning of "us" in the place. This myth contains a temporal allusion; it refers to a time when the world as the white Rhodesians came to know it achieved its form and location (cf. Basso 1990, 115). In the solidification of the traveler's journey into the pioneering story,

the landscape becomes vacant and void; its features become un-named obstacles on the pioneering path. The root story, then, is a moral description of a journey through the landscape, towards a destination – a difficult and tedious journey won over by remorselessness of heroic men and a few women. The men on the road in the first account are no heroes. They can become such only in retrospective collective representations. The second narrative account asserts the ancestral journey, the forefathers' handwork, which was put into the crafting of the landscape, into the "opening up of the country." Meanings attached to the journey unfold in stories and rituals; the voyage of the ancestors is recited both in family histories as well in diasporic commemorations.⁵² Thus, we can conclude that in early travelers' accounts, landscape was hardly empty; human involvement was undoubtedly present. However, as the pioneer narrative gradually fell into its form, the experience on which the story is grounded was subdued. Pace by pace, inch by inch, the traces of human involvement are set aside as the landscape in the emanating colonial canon is construed as an open stage for the heroic action of the pioneer ancestors.

The Bush as a Moral Guide

I wish to speak a word for Nature, for absolute freedom and wildness, as contrasted with a freedom and culture merely civil – to regard man as an inhabitant, or a part and parcel of Nature, rather than a member of society (The Portable Thoreau 1947, 592).

Rural values

Often in analysis of settler colonials, their wilderness discourse is seen as a self-legitimation of the white position in the colonial society via modernization – the building of roads and railways, schools and hospitals. However, although this white colonial discourse of "making something out of nothing," of leaving one's individual mark on the waiting, vacant ground, or helping oneself to its bounties, does tend to dominate ex-Rhodesian self-analysis, as well as popular and academic analysis of the Rhodesians, there is, of course, the other side to the modernity coin. In various accounts, the "anti-modernity" of white colonials – their anachronism and resistance to change – is strongly emphasized. Anti-modernity is linked to claiming what are regarded as "rural values," values often read into the landscape. Michèle Dominy, for example, writes about the romanticized pioneer inheritance in New Zealand. She quotes Leonard Wilcox, who writes about the "quintessential New Zealand myth of the lonely struggle to transform a wild and remote country into a pastoral utopia" (2001, 46).

⁵² A re-enactment of the pioneer route and the creation of a commemorative site in South Africa will be discussed in Part IV.

Wilcox connects high-country romanticism to shared resistance to the world's surging on New Zealand's "pastoral innocence":

[A]n ideal harmony between man and nature suggests a profound resistance to modernism, an effort to preserve a virgin land and virgin moral order in spite of the penetration of modernism into nearly every part of the globe. New Zealanders define themselves in terms of their geographical separation and pastoral isolation from the conflicts of modernism. (ibid.)

The bush versus plantation dichotomization, articulated as love of the bush, is expressed in more or less every ex-Rhodesian self-reflection. For instance, Stuart, a retired engineer in his 60's explains it in the following way:

I would love to live in the bush where there are no houses at all. I love the *bush*. I go back as often as I can (...) It is just being on your own. With the animals and the trees and just nature. You know a lot of people love *towns*. They can't live without a town. I can live without a town quite easily (...) I take my boat, I go fishing. But it's not even the fishing. Fishing is an excuse. You sit there and you hold a fishing rod and you just look into the bush and everything else and it's just so relaxing!

Claiming such "rural values" and placing innocence into the bush may indeed be interpreted as political arguments. Peter Godwin and Ian Hancock (1999), in their research of white Rhodesia of the 1970's, question what they regard as a white obsession with the bush and the proclamation of rural values among a very urbanized population.⁵³ These rural values in urbanized war-torn Rhodesia of 1970's, have to be set in the context of fervent white nationalism and the linking of that national identity to the pioneer history "of heaving the country out of the bush."⁵⁴ This nationalism was not only a question of racial politics within Zimbabwe, but also construed in relation to other countries, particularly Britain. Throughout Rhodesian history, but especially from the UDI of 1965 onwards, white Rhodesia's relationship with Britain was very complicated. The proclaiming of rural values was about moral elevation against the propagated degeneration of values in Europe. In the late 1970's, a women's organization published a series of papers in order to defend Rhodesia – and the civil war it was faring – against foreign accusations, and to explain "Rhodesia as it really is":⁵⁵

⁵³ By 1951 two-thirds of the whites in Rhodesia lived in towns or cities. By 1969 the number of urban-dwellers had risen to four-fifths of the white population (Godwin and Hancock 1999, 20).

⁵⁴ See Chennells (1996) for the linking of the "glorification of wilderness" with white nationalist discourse, and Maughan-Brown (1985) for similar analysis regarding white Kenyans.

⁵⁵ A very similar phenomenon took place in Kenya during the Mau Mau years. In 1953, the East Africa Women's League published a series of newsletters "to our

Rhodesians are the sort of people who made the 'Great' of Britain mean just that. They have retained codes of ethics and behaviour, manners and civility. Our children grow up in a clean, un-polluted and healthful climate. Sport and exercise turn them into strapping youngsters (...) Often, fathers and sons fight for our country, while mothers and daughters serve in voluntary organizations, working for the country they love – a country founded by their parents or grandparents, who first established the British principles of law and order, decency and fair play (...) Rhodesia (...) retains the ideals and self-sufficiency of the pioneer spirit. Rhodesians are hardy, cheerful people with an unconquerable determination to succeed, overcoming any obstacles (Rhodesia as it really is 1978).

Whereas Elaine and Richard's wilderness is offering opportunity and calling for development, in David, Norman and Stuart's country-versus-society discourse, wilderness is idealized and contrasted with modernity. The bush is morally valued as pure and innocent. David "never much cared for the *society*." He made do with it, but he really "loved the actual *country* itself." And for Norman, the place that calls him is "just pure God's *bush*" and "not this stupid *plantation*." Stuart, as well, could easily "live without a town." In this sense, their country and bush connote to those long-established ideas in European wilderness thinking in which wilderness is regarded as intrinsically precious and morally pure, rather than valuable in the sense of what it could be made into.

This argumentation presents a moral dichotomy of nature against society, so deeply – albeit ambiguously – grounded in "Western" thought, which I have attempted to trace in this chapter. As J. M. Coetzee pointed out, its origins can be traced to the Judaeo-Christian tradition. Likewise, they may be found in Greek and Roman thought. This moral narrative about an ideal relationship between man and nature, and the glorification of wilderness, locates moral decadence in the city. One can also see how these long-established conceptualizations of wilderness are further applauded in more recent ecological thinking. The very place seen as empty, and its emptiness interpreted as under-used, may be considered as the pristine, romanticized home of the "ecological man."⁵⁶ Wilderness is regarded as something that necessitates preserving and management, both for its own

friends in Great Britain" in an attempt to put up a defence against accusations of journalists writing about "trigger-happy" settlers – "a suggestion which is as hurtful as untrue" (Henn 1953; see Uusihakala 1998, 103-104 for further discussion).

⁵⁶ In contemporary Zimbabwe, William Wolmer argues, the wilderness vision in which conservation and development programs are rooted has two facets. On the one hand the 'low-veld' landscape is seen as "disease-ridden, barren and fearful landscape that must be battled and tamed to become productive" (Wolmer, 2000). On the other hand, wilderness is regarded as a "pristine and glorious piece of national heritage that must be preserved or rehabilitated."

sake – that is, for the sake of “biodiversity” – and for the sake of human recreation and restoration.⁵⁷

If detached from its contexts, this bush-versus-plantation talk may all seem to subscribe to the same invariable rural-urban-opposition. However, when looked at more closely, one finds significant differences in the dichotomies. Elaine’s open country versus the stitched-up one is very much the pioneering frontier’s space. For David and Norman, as well as for Stuart, wilderness is meaningful in itself. It is not waiting for anything. It is not lacking. It is all already there, solidly and powerfully. They do speak of the wilderness familiarized in countless pioneering accounts. But the meanings given to it are those of untouched and unspoiled and pure, rather than of void and opportunity. For Norman and Stuart, the bush as pure signifies isolation from other people. Their bush is about certain at-onement with nature. This isolation is about a sense of belonging within the environment and a source of solitude within oneself. On the other hand, Norman’s bush is also very much peopled. As a playground, it is about deep engagement with the landscape. For David, the bush is not peopled but neither is it empty of human engagement. Quite the contrary: David’s wilderness is full of myths and spirits and beliefs, some of which are concretely carved into the ground and may be read in the ruins.

Spiritual land

When a landscape is not dwelled in, but remembered, it is set above the mundane: it is – in David and Norman’s case at least – sacralized. Land clearly holds a spiritual significance for Norman and David. They both feel a spiritual affinity for the land. For Norman, who defines himself as a non-religious man, the wilderness landscape is God’s own country. According to dictionary entries, God’s (own) Country signifies:

- 1) The country, or part of the country to which one belongs (Wordsworth Dictionary of Idioms).
- 2) An earthly paradise, esp. with reference to the United States (The Oxford English Reference Dictionary).

Although both of these facets of wilderness may be present, the latter view has, in recent years, become hegemonic.

⁵⁷ The American Wilderness Act of 1964 is an example of such a definition: “A wilderness, in contrast with those areas where man and his own works dominate the landscape, is hereby recognized as an area where the earth and its community of life are untrammelled by man, where man himself is a visitor who does not remain. An area of wilderness is further defined to mean (...) [land] which generally appears to have been affected primarily by the forces of nature, with the imprint of man’s work substantially unnoticeable; has outstanding opportunities for solitude or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation” (Wilderness Act, Public Law 88-577, 88th Congress of the US, 1964).

3) = Godzone: mid-19c: a clipping of God's Own Country, a term applied by British settlers to various territories. An informal term for especially New Zealand and sometimes Australia (The Oxford Companion to the English Language).

"God's own country" was a shared idiom commonly used in referring to Rhodesia in the ex-Rhodesian community. According to the above dictionary entries, the expression can be taken to signify a place of belonging, a place conceived of as an earthly paradise. In Norman's, as well as in other ex-Rhodesian usage, Rhodesia as "God's own country" is clearly a place of belonging. It is one's native ground, a birthplace, a home and a homeland. And it is also the earthly paradise. However, unlike in these rather mundane dictionary clarifications of the idiom, Norman stresses the sacred, God-given essence of the place.⁵⁸ To him, the wilderness expresses the presence and nearness of God. That particular nook in the middle of rural Rhodesia into which he offers driving directions, that particular place which calls him, is "God's bush." It is a place that God at the time of creation "kept and reserved for himself." For Norman the *earthly paradise* is the virgin, pristine bush. Norman's intriguing gardening practice, his recreation of a little spot for God in the middle of mowed lawns and manicured shrubs, is his unique way of composing a sanctuary. It is his way of worshipping. In this sense, his gardening arrangement praises the bush in general, as in the dichotomic employment of the idea of wilderness.

On the other hand, Norman's gardening is also his particular way of re-collecting and commemorating the place of his belonging, the childhood bush. In remembering the bush, Norman reconstructs the social world of human relationships, which in part constituted the bush as he remembers it. In diaspora, people bring along their places of belonging in things. These mnemonics bear within memories of landscapes and of social relationships. Norman too, held Rhodesia in a selection of memorabilia. However, he also brought along his place of belonging in his gardening practice. In a sense, he bears and transports the lost place with him, reconstructing it in wherever he moves. It is not merely that he transports the idea of an ideal place. His bush, his wilderness, is very particular. It is a particular place because it can be so meticulously, cartographically located on a map. It is particular because it is *a* bush filled with memories of social relationships, of doing things in it and with it. In this sense, his God's spot is a complex construction bearing a metonymic relationship with God's own Country.

⁵⁸ The spiritualization of land may also be linked to the idea of a promised land; the idea of a chosen people in their God-given land, of divine purpose carved into a geographic territory. This type of conceptualization can be found in much of the literature on Afrikaners in South Africa, as well as in analysis of various diasporic groups. According to Vincent Crapanzano (1986) for example, the Afrikaner history in South Africa is narrated in Biblical terms.

Furthermore, it epitomizes both the visual and moral ideal of landscape as well as social history and interpersonal experience.

For many ex-Rhodesians, the sacrosanct nature of the bush relies on its isolation from humans and their achievements. "I would love to live in the bush where there are no houses at all," Stuart said. "It is just being on your own with the animals and the trees and just nature," he explained. This is solitude, which Jay Vest, citing Gene Bammel, refers to Plato's *Phaedo*, in which the way to true wisdom comes from being alone by oneself. This state of aloneness, *anachoresis*, means "flight, retirement, withdrawal, and signifies separation from the distracting, the trivial, the mundane" (Vest 1987, 308). Stuart's sense of solitude is akin to what Vest regards as the Interior theme of solitude:

The Interior theme of solitude is associated with the idea of space as a lonely, unfrequented, or uninhabited place (...) In this case, natural elements such as wildlife, undisturbed vegetation, the backdrop of forms and physical forces, collectively compose wildness and our reaction to it (...) We are compelled to go to the Interior (wilderness) to find the soulful interior (self). Contiguous with this ideal of soulfulness in self-knowledge is the knowing of the land in its wildness (...) Deep within this solitude is that of nature's solitude: the condition and opportunity for wild things – plants, animals, and landscapes – to be alone, undisturbed, and free from human influence, presence, interference, dominion, and control. In essence the Interior (wilderness) must be free from management if it is to reflect the true disposition of the land – i.e., the "will-of-the-land" – rather than the manipulative desires of mankind (*ibid.*, 312).

For Stuart, the wilderness or the bush is not as much a particular place as it is for Norman. Stuart "goes back" to the bush as often as he can, although the bush he goes back to is not always the same. Here we may return to Christopher Tilley's notion of landscape. Knowledge of particular locales (particular places in the bush) that Stuart has previously encountered "set up structures of expectation and feeling" (1996, 162). These "structures of expectation and feeling" affect the way the bush, wherever it may be located, is interpreted and categorized. Thus, the bush may be conceived of as not so much a particular place as it is an experience of place. For Stuart "bush" is about being with the environment, it is about at-one-ment with nature. Stuart's *God's Own Country* is wilderness as a generator of a sense of solitude. Wilderness, understood as a presence of nature and an absence of other people, creates a sense of individuality – individuality, which can, of course, only ever be defined and realized in relation to other people.

David, for his part, locates the spirituality of the landscape specifically in the mountains, which had endured as he remembered them in spite of very definite changes in the environment. In David's lyrical words one

reads his being part with the mountains, his participation with the sacred: rapture. Therein lies a sense of David's "feeling *with* the land," not for it: a profound, intent sense of being home. The home landscape of mountain wilderness is conceived of as limitless and powerful. It is envisaged as ever-present and eternally stable, beyond the mundane. This is pronounced on David's return to the farm. Although there were but random remains of their farm house – the solid living room fireplace excepting – David's impression was that the place had not changed, for "the mountains had lost none of their presence."

Conclusion

All existing things are either in place or not without place

-Archytas⁵⁹

A simple-looking opposition of bush to plantation seems to encompass a whole set of discussions and argumentations. Shared cultural knowledge about a sense of wilderness envelops these variations on a theme. We have seen how David and Norman's sense of bush may be linked to broader "Western" and colonial ideas about people's relationships with land in general and about wilderness in particular. And we have seen how heterogenous and contradictory such conceptualizations are. We have also seen how ex-Rhodesians' ideas and practices regarding landscape – as well as the case of the Matopos – can be tied in with local politics (and poetics) of place. Canonized places, such as the Inyanga and the Matopos, are held onto in exile by re-inscribing their significance over and over again. The juxtaposition of bush with what it is not reveals that talking about place is not "just talking about place." Bush-talk is a moral discourse through which people demonstrate who "we" are and who "we" are not. Keith Basso notes that when members of a community speak about their landscape, "whenever they name it, or classify it, or evaluate it, or move to tell stories about it – they unthinkingly represent it in ways that are compatible with shared understandings of how, in the fullest sense, they know themselves to occupy it" (1988, 101). To talk about bush is to imply culturally shared experience of place as well as to employ culturally shared expressive notions regarding that place. That in this discourse "we" become who "we" are through belonging to a particular corner of the world is one thing. What is also significant is that the bush as a place is invested with messages and meanings, which are not self-evidently unitary or collectively shared. The beauty of it is that we may all love the bush, but what exactly it is that we love in it varies.

Moreover, the meanings given to place are reflected upon from a spatial and temporal distance. Thus, in their recollections people constantly move back and forth between praxis and narrative; between sensually

⁵⁹ As cited and translated by S. Sambursky (1982), quoted in Casey (2002, 266).

experienced being and belonging in the place and viewing and telling about the place from afar. When the landscape is remembered and represented rather than lived in, the non-verbalizable experience of being with places is transfigured and the discourse of places is projected outwards. In such discourse places become mnemonic and narrative devices through which a homeland is composed and a story of “us” and our connection with proper places of belonging is morally narrated.

Although the landscape once unverbalizably known through everyday enactment with it was neither void of symbolic and commemorative dimensions, nor of culturally constructed meanings and messages, these meanings and messages become more audible in exile. Norman’s place longs for him and cries out for his return. In Norman and David’s reflections of place, the place is given agency: it calls, haunts and draws you. Paul Basu, in his work on the Scottish diaspora journeys back to homeland, addresses a similar phenomenon: “It is as if the landscape itself ‘holds’ the memory of its past and tells its own story separate from the subject who perceives it (...) Thus the ‘sense of place’ may be experienced as if it were emitted from or dwelt in place itself, an *animus loci*” (2001, 340).

Places, of course, only ever say what we allow them to say. As Keith Basso reminds us, places are “animated by the thoughts and feelings of persons who attend to them” and may thereby be considered as “natural reflectors that return awareness to the source from which it springs” (1996, 56). Thus, to hear this begging and yearning of the land is to forge a bond between the one who longs and the place in which one feels one rightfully belongs. A sense of place, Basso maintains, is “fueled by sentiments of inclusion, belonging, and connectedness to the past. Sense of place roots individuals in the social and cultural soils from which they have sprung together, holding them there in the grip of a shared identity, a localized version of selfhood” (ibid., 59). In this way, the Rhodesian diasporic sense of place is hardly about rootlessness, quite the opposite. Basu argues that in the case of Scottish diaspora, the practice of travel to the ancestral land is a ‘homecoming’: the pilgrims want to “reassert ties of blood and territory rather than celebrate their freedom from fixity and roots” (2001, 346). Thus, he asserts, senses of rootedness, both territorial and social, “continue to give people ontological security in a world of perceived movement” (ibid., 336). What differentiates Norman and David’s homecomings from those of Basu’s pilgrimages, is the fact that for Norman and David the places that long for them are places where they have grown up, and thus the histories of these places are intertwined with their own biographies. In such pilgrimages, Norman and David and others are “going home.” These journeys convey a deeply rooted loyalty and commitment to a place left behind. It is a loyalty politically contested, but this notwithstanding, a loyalty constitutive of social bonds in the diaspora community.

PART III “ALMOST LIKE HOME”

Introduction

Norman: Well, I'm sorry you're going back to Finland. I can't figure out why you wanna go back to Finland.

Katja: It's my home! There's my family, my friends.

Suzie: [Norman's wife]: It's funny, your talking like that. My grandmother was a Scotch and came from Edinburgh and she came out to Zimbabwe in 1902 and married there (...) They lived in Gwelo and then they moved to Salisbury and she had a florist shop in Salisbury for many years. And she always used to say to me, she was going home on a holiday. And I said to her: "But Granny, this is your home!" She said: "No, it's not." It's only now that I'm grown up and I've experienced this as well, *I know what she means by home.*

In the above discussion, Norman, Suzie and I were all circling around the notion of home, but we somehow seemed to talk past one another, or did we? Home is a slippery soap of a concept. Trying to grasp it, it slips out of a firm hold of one's hand. It bounces in all sorts of directions: spatial, temporal and emotional – width, length, depth. The short dialogue above illustrates these directions. Norman, Suzie and I were sitting in the rather small and crammed living room of their flat. There was a dining room table, a couch, three armchairs with crocheted rectangular doilies on the armrests, a couple of small coffee tables, and a curious looking apparatus with which Suzie was weaving. The walls were decorated with Rhodesian/Zimbabwean memorabilia: a print of the Victoria Falls, a few masks and woven fishing nets, family photos on a shelf in one corner. The TV was on, the volume loud, a parrot walked in and out of the open balcony door "wishing to bite me," they said. "It's like a watchdog, you know, but before that we had a monkey," Suzie remarked. Clearly, it was a very much lived-in space. A home.

And yet, this discussion was dominated by Norman's powerful assertions of home in the bush, a home place in Zimbabwe he always kept returning to and which forever kept haunting him. Neither Norman nor Suzie could fathom why I would be returning home after my fieldwork. For them it seemed evident that whoever had been to Africa, would never want to leave. They would make it their home. In Norman's understanding in particular, Africa had such a spell that the individual would be almost compelled to stay. My own vague definitions of home as a place where my family and friends were did not seem to impress them much. Suzie equated me with her own pioneering emigrant grandmother, who after decades

in Rhodesia would still refer to Scotland as home. Having had to leave Zimbabwe, Suzie could now sympathize with her grandmother's longing: "I know what she means by home." So even in this small episode, home is many things. It is the physically fixed setting, the domestic dwelling place of the present. It is Africa as homeland in general and Norman's defined and memorable Rhodesian bush in particular. It is, by my own spontaneous definition, a site of meaningful social relationships. It is, as exemplified by Suzie's story, an emotive concept heavy with longing, a place where one is born, thus, literally a native place, a place of origin.

In recent years, there has been a growing concern in post-modernist anthropology to tackle what home might mean in the context of migration and movement. Rapport and Dawson (1998), for example, argue that physical migration and displacement unsettle and confuse what they consider to be the "traditional" anthropological understanding of home (*pace* Douglas) as the "organization of space over time." This sense of being home, they maintain, becomes disturbed in an era of global movement. Citing John Berger (1984) Rapport claims that home is a much more mobile concept than has previously been understood. Rather than in physically fixed settings, home comes to be found in interactional routines, which may be engaged with wherever one decamps (Rapport 1995, 268). Significantly, home can be located in the movement of narratives people tell of themselves, in the perpetual reinvention of the self. And, not only can one be home in and through movement, but that movement itself can be one's veritable home (Rapport and Dawson 1998, 29-30; Rapport and Overing 2000, 158).

The ex-Rhodesians are a multiply migrant community; their immigration into Rhodesia and emigration out of Zimbabwe are constitutive of their understanding of themselves; their intense quest for a place and a community of belonging is grounded in movement. Thus, they are a group of people who seem to fit nicely into the above proposition that people today may be at home in movement, or wherever they decamp. However, somewhat challenging Rapport and Dawson's rather individualistic concept of home,¹ I want to argue that in this diaspora community, in and through multiple movements, home *is* organized over space and over time both as an idea and as a fixed setting: an ensemble of belongings, tangible objects that may be called *homethings*. How then to approach home both as a mobile idea or category and as a fixed setting? Mary Douglas (1991a, 289) argues that home starts by bringing some space under control. Home has always to do with spatial arrangement, whether it is the construction of

¹ Paul Basu (2001, 335; 342), writing on notions of home and homeland in the Scottish diaspora, also questions whether ethnographic evidence supports Rapport and Dawson's claims about the insubstantiality and mobility of home. He argues that their anthropology is more individualistic than social and is critical of their emphasis on the ability of individuals to transcend the structures of cultural discourse and continuously reinvent themselves.

house,² the spacing of rooms or the arrangement of objects. This does not mean that a home is necessarily firmly fixed in space, but neither does any shelter qualify as a home. Douglas stresses that there has to be something regular about the appearance and reappearance of furnishings of home, a home always has an orientation, however minimal. For Douglas, in short, home is always a localizable idea (*ibid.*).

Home as a domestic space incorporates the material contents: the furnishing and the decoration, which I have glossed as homethings. Lawrence J. Taylor (1999) argues that although anthropologists have considered the house as a key cultural construct in the built environment, they have paid relatively little attention to the “assembled environment”: the furniture and artifacts, bric-a-brac and ornaments, through which domestic spaces are furnished and decorated. Csikszentmihalyi and Rochberg-Halton maintain that of all the things that people surround themselves with, home contains the objects that are the most special: “those that were selected by the person to attend to regularly or to have close at hand, that create permanence in the intimate life of a person, and therefore that are most involved in making up his or her identity” (1981, 17). Following this line of thought, homes and homethings have to be seen not merely as expressions of cultural values of certain groups, but as constitutive of the groups through time. Thus, home may be thought of as having transformative power – simultaneously restricting and enabling – vis-à-vis its inhabitants. But significantly, home, as Mary Douglas (1991a) suggests, is realized through the actions of these inhabitants; through the routine ways of spacing provisions, dividing labor, synchronizing timings and placings. Home is then to be found in domestic practices and routines through which spatiotemporal order is realized.

In addition to home being about spatial organization actualized in routine social practices involving household members in various ways, home is significantly an existential idea and an idiom through which people figure out and question their place in the world. In this sense, home is used synonymously with belonging. A sense of being *at home* is built on memories of past homes and musings over the potential to re-realize this homeness in new places of dwelling. Therefore, the notion of home, in short, is simultaneously material and corporeal as well as inherent of moral and emotional, even cosmological connotations. I approach the question of

² The term “home” has a close relationship with neighboring concepts such as house, household and family, which anthropologists, as Birdwell-Pheasant and Lawrence-Zúñiga (1999) show, have sought to differentiate. The mutuality of these concepts, the authors demonstrate, is embedded in many European cultural traditions: “The term “house” is often paired with (or interchanged with) “home” (German: Haus and Heim). These two terms describe distinct cultural constructions. While “house” implies a physical structure or shelter, “home” defines a place of origin and retreat, such as one’s natal village or birthplace, one’s country or other native place (*ibid.*, 6).

how people are *at home* by paying attention to the intimately known material everyday domestic world composed of homethings – sets of furniture, bits and pieces of decoration, which seem to condense the spatial, temporal and emotional aspects of home. I consider that it is largely via homethings – in their packing and unloading, their arranging, displaying and caretaking – that the sense of home may be communicated both to oneself and to others. This is particularly the case when people's lifehistories are marked with numerous moves. Only very few of the people I associated with during my fieldwork had just one family-home to which they connected their home-memories. On the contrary, most had moved quite regularly, often staying in one place for just few years. This has important consequences regarding the sense of home. First of all, the place-bound sense of belonging becomes rather broad and vague; it becomes connected to "our country" in general. And secondly, the idea of home is not so much connected to a particular dwelling place, a house, but becomes centered on homethings – the things one packs and unpacks, the things through which one creates and experiences a continuity of homeness. Thus, homes in movement can be seen as variations of a cultural theme.

In the first chapter of this section I consider how the past home in Rhodesia is remembered from spatial and temporal distance. It is significant that these remembered homes are homes in colonial Rhodesia. In addition to the diasporic location of the practice of remembering, the colonial context is also where the analysis must also be situated. I will address these questions by focusing on one particular case, Kevin's home. Through this home, through its physical layout and its practices and routines, I will analyze some key aspects of colonial domesticity. Kevin's home is not meant to be representative of a "general Rhodesian home." It is a vivid description of one particular family's home(s), by way of which we may peek into some general recurring aspects of a Rhodesian home as it is remembered and reconstructed in memory narratives. Significantly, the home narratives also reveal differentiation within the category of the colonial; the experienced Rhodesian homes and homelives were quite distinct and heterogeneous. Yet the differences seem to be glossed over when the "Rhodesian home" is remembered from the diasporic position.

Kevin's recollection is also an explicit narrative of homethings, and it enables us to understand better that which is often implicit in stories of bringing home across the border. I discuss this in the following chapter, where I look at how and if home travels. I consider how the idea of home is thought about, how the homeness of home is constructed and how that homeness is transported to new places of dwelling. Here I return to the question of how, and if, people are at home in movement. I then consider how the diasporic homes are marked as Rhodesian by specific displays of Rhodesian memorabilia. I will end this section by discussing how the physical and spiritual location of home is discussed in the community, and how such a discussion is constitutive of ex-Rhodesian we-ness.

1. REMEMBERING THE HOME THAT WAS

“And then the Bell Would Ring” – at Kevin’s Place³

1. My parents gave us very, very strong values. They were strong on etiquette, manners. We had to stand up when a lady came into the room; we had to pull a chair out for a lady. And we had to learn the right eating utensil for the table. We were basically colonials. We had silver on the table every single day. Silver, Georgian silver, which my sister’s still got. It was from my father’s side. And my mother would light candles for dinner at the least opportunity she could get.

2. My parents used to have, what they call in Rhodesia, sundowner. Every single night of their life. As the sun went down, the husband and wife would sit on the veranda or in the lounge, depending on the weather and they’d have a sundowner (...). It was at six o’clock, on the dot. And they would be sitting there and a bell would ring. The cook, at six o’clock, drinks were served. Absolutely. You could set your clock by it. It was absolutely religious. The bell would ring and they would say: “Right, there’s drinks.” And they would sit down. My mother used to oversee the cooking. Oversee it. Only. And then they would have their sundowners, maybe one or two drinks, maybe three, tops. And then at about seven o’clock, seven, quarter past seven, the bell would ring again. And we would be seated at the table and the roast or the meal of the day would be brought in. Not carved. My father had to sit and carve it for all of us. And then the cook would come around and he would serve us our vegetables and our potatoes. We were told we had to sit like this [places his hands on his lap], and he’d come around and say: “Potatoes?” You’d say: “Yes, please. Two. Two spoons of peas and cabbage, please.”

3. And also our lunches. We used to have like two main meals a day. We always used to go home for lunch. Everybody got home at one o’clock. We’d sit down for lunch at quarter past one. And again it was the full regalia. We were very colonial. We used to sit down to fried egg, bacon and a full English breakfast every morning with cereal, with orange juice and everything before going to school. We would have sandwiches

³ I have omitted some repetition; otherwise this extract is directly from one recorded conversation with Kevin. I have placed a few remarks and explanations of Kevin’s gestures in brackets []. I have added my own questions in brackets only when what I have said clearly seems to have altered or interrupted Kevin’s story.

at school and then we'd come back and we'd have a full lunch. A full roast, everything. My father would go and lie down for 20 minutes and then go back to work (...) Lunch was as big as the supper, but no drinks. Glass of water. Elevenses were mainly on Saturdays and Sundays. They never drank during the week. They never drank, drank, drank during the week.

4. We had every opportunity of being brought up the right way. In other words, we never ever had a problem if we went visiting. We knew how to conduct ourselves. We always knew the right knife and fork to pick up, serviettes, and it was always very nice. My mother instilled a lot of those things. But my father basically expected them. He expected, he didn't get involved. He expected. My father, in those days, the Rhodesian men were quite lazy. They never fixed things around the house. Not like the South African counter parts. They would work, they would provide good money. My father had nothing to do with running of the house. He used to come home and he had nothing to do with it. When he came home he used to drop down. And he believed he was a good provider. He wasn't the kind of guy who'd sand down a door and paint it and all that. He brought in all this help. You never would have caught my father in a supermarket pushing a trolley on a Saturday morning. That would have been out of the question. And not even me. My father would get involved with a new bicycle to be bought. He'd go and see that the bicycle was up to it. And he'd buy the cars, he'd buy the house, he'd do all the important things, like house buying, car buying. Furniture was my mother. He would give my mother money and she would do it. And he expected a beautiful well kept home with three very well brought-up children. And didn't want anything much to do with it (...) And my father was, I wouldn't say wealthy, I would say very, very comfortable, and we wanted for nothing. We wanted for nothing.

5. My mum and dad bought and sold property like it was going out of fashion. So, it wasn't just one childhood home. They actually did a lot of speculating and they made a lot of money off property. We lived in about ten houses. My mother was a homemaker. She was a homemaker but she used to get bored quickly. They'd buy these houses and she would fix them. She would buy these houses that were like a bit run down. She was a great visualizer. She could visualize and materialize. Visualize and materialize. So she would walk into a house and she'd say: "Do this and do that and do this." And they'd drop a pool in, you know, big paved driveway. And the garden was always immaculate. Immaculate! But again, no Africanization.

All right, there were trees, the *msasa* trees, never cut trees down, we'd leave the indigenous trees, but we'd incorporate with beautiful carnations. My mother was a good gardener; my mum and dad were both very keen on the garden. Roses and bases, borders cut, you know, they grew a lawn like, they'd take a hose pipe and bend it and make a shape and they'd get somebody to come and cut and make, like the flowerbeds weren't like an army, they used to go like that [draws abstract wavy shapes in the air], and there was perennials and bi-annuals, annuals and bi-annuals, mixture of color and grass manicured, cut every second day.

6. Oh yes. My mother would dive in [the new house], put our beautiful things there, 'cause we always had beautiful stuff: beautiful pictures and paintings and silver and brass and glassware and Sanderson linen. Kenya type furnishings. ["Did you have like any African...?"] No! No, not at all. No soapstone. Nothing. Nothing at all. And if you ask me what are my pet hates, if somebody gives me a curio from Africa, I will hit them over their head with it. Ok. Because I don't like anything like that. My taste is modernized, convenient, old, old things. Furnishings of old nature, but clean. You know, restored antique look. Old motorcars, good quality. Everything must be of good quality.

7. [In our lounge, we would have] a large fireplace, big bay window, beautiful, beautiful drapes, very 100% full at the windows, edge to edge carpeted, Sanderson linen, lounge suite with beautiful occasional chairs, antique chairs and things like that. We love brass, good brass, old brass, silver, good silver, old silver. Glasses, crystal, Venetian, good stuff. But absolutely, definitely no curios. No, no, no, no, no. We would have landscape paintings, could be of England, could be of Rhodesia. Beautiful oils and lovely canvas paintings. But not like African kraals and things like that. Would be of a beautiful sunset. A Rhodesian sunset. But certainly no curio would tie up with that. No ways.

8. Our house was always immaculate. You know, the silver was pulled out every week and polished and the brass, and we weren't allowed to run right in the house and make a mess. And what I didn't mention was, when we finished eating, we would put our knives and forks together, fold our serviette up, put it on the side plate and walk away. All of us. And the rest was for the servants. The table was cleared and the dishes were washed and put away, not by us. By our, they used to call them servants in those days. I don't know whether they liked that word. They weren't servants, as we know. But they were helpers. They were

known as a cook boy, house girl and a garden boy, although they were full grown people. You see. It was very colonial. ["How many hours did they work, do you have any recollection?"] They would work from, but they had time off, you know, during the day. They would probably come, they would work from say about seven. They'd probably work from about seven to eight. ["Did they wake you up with tea?"] Yes. Tea to bed on a tray (...) They were always given the weekends off. So they never worked. Monday to Friday, about from seven till about eight with like half an hour for tea, an hour for lunch, half an hour for tea and then rest in the afternoon. But they never worked weekends. Sometimes one of them, I think, would work on a Saturday. But on Sunday we were servantless as such. We would have a big Sunday lunch. Always. Roast beef, Yorkshire pudding, all this stuff. My mum would do it. Sometimes. But she would never peel the potatoes or beans. All the food was peeled and beans were cleaned and everything like that.

9. You know on the weekends, we'd go out to the dam; we'd go to the golf club or something. And Sunday afternoon, we always used to get in the car and go for a drive. And then my dad would go and buy us a chocolate or a coke or an ice cream. Every Sunday like clockwork. You know, and I remember those Sundays perfectly. And on Sunday afternoon, my mum would sit, put her feet up. And my father used to say: "Right, it's our turn now." And we would make meat sandwiches or something from the lunch table. Or cheese toast or something. My mother would do absolutely nothing on a Sunday. Finished. Over. I mean, Monday morning, the whole thing started again.

The Wholesome Home

Family background

Kevin comes from a family of "self-made snobs," as he himself describes it, a family in which "money was the last of our problems." Although Kevin depicts a home, and a homelife, which were far more affluent than those of most of the people I talked with, the basic elements in the house as well as some general features in this family's way of life were present in most other stories I was told. Kevin's father's mother was born in Ireland in the 1870's and came to Rhodesia to work as a nurse's aide. Kevin's father's father, a doctor, was of Scottish background. The paternal grandfather, together with his thirteen brothers, all decided to leave Scotland, apparently at the turn of the century. "It was obviously opportunity," Kevin said, when I asked whether he knew the reason for all the brothers emigrating. "I know for Africa, there was that sort of "Africa calling" -type of thing. Look,

maybe it was a lack of opportunity." The grandfather's thirteen brothers all immigrated to South America, "and blended there with the locals," Kevin said. The grandfather was the only one who decided to come to Rhodesia, for reasons unknown to Kevin.

Kevin's father was the only child in this family, "a spoilt young man, a real little Great Gatsby," who drove a sports car, played tennis and was sent to college in England, which was not very common in Rhodesia.⁴ Kevin's mother, on the other hand, was from a completely different background. She was born in South Africa, to a relatively poor family. "Poor parents, but actually quite high classed. Good stock but no bucks." Kevin's parents met during the Second World War in South Africa and soon got married. "So I think that when my mother married my father, she married well. And she quite enjoyed this new little set-up that she'd married into." In Rhodesia Kevin's family lived in a town, situated in central Rhodesia, in the midst of white farmland, where both his father and mother ran their own businesses. There were three children in Kevin's family, Kevin being the youngest. Kevin became a salesman, whereas his brother and sister started farming. Within this family, Kevin felt that he was the black sheep; he had "amounted to the least." He was the only member of his family to emigrate from Zimbabwe at independence, because he "didn't really have a life" unlike his siblings, who were tied to the land more firmly through their farms.

In the small town where Kevin had spent his childhood and youth, the family seems to have had a relatively significant social position. Kevin was among the very few ex-Rhodesians I worked with who actively emphasized the class distinctions within the colonial white society. As a rule, the existence of class difference was either played down or denied all together. When I asked whether his family had associated with the "not-so-well-off" whites in town, Kevin explained that they did mix, but there were definitely cliques. His family associated mostly with "people of substance," such as "doctors, lawyers, business people and entrepreneurs." "There was a sort of money group. So basically the rich stuck together, there was definitely this money distinction, not class distinction (...) We had poor friends and rich friends and all of that. But generally speaking, birds of a feather flock together."

The colonial home

The house Kevin so vividly and sensuously recasts and brings alive seems, unnervingly, to be the very house one *imagines* when one thinks of white

⁴ Unlike in colonial (as well as in postcolonial) white Kenya, it was relatively rare for Rhodesians to educate their children in England. If Rhodesians were educated abroad, it was usually in South Africa. This had to do both with economic means and with the closeness of South Africa, both geographically and through family connections.

colonial homes in settler Africa. Every aspect, all the elements of extreme privilege and the ensemble of characters are set up and positioned the way we know them to be in what could be called our image gallery of the colonial. There is the grand spacious house with the pool and the roses and the manicured grass; there is the brass and the silver, the wall-to-wall carpeting and the sunset landscapes; there is the overseeing madam and the punctual servants, the providing, patriarchal father and the well-brought-up children. Kevin's place is the colonial home epitomized. Kevin's "full regalia" – consisting of both *homethings* and various *homedoings* – can be considered as the paraphernalia of civilization in colonial cultures. The silver and the brass, the glasses and the linen belong to a code, which has been seen as emphasizing and creating racial and cultural distance, articulating hierarchies and categories within the spheres of colonial households (Stoler 1989a, 640; Hansen 1989, 54-56; Siikala 1982, 57).

The colonial home, both as a material setting and as an idea, has in the past two or three decades become an important topic in research on colonial cultures. It is presented as perhaps the main stage on which the internal divisions among the Europeans in colonial societies, as well as the encounters between the colonizer and colonized were played out, and where the symbolic manifestations of civilization are particularly apparent (J. and J. Comaroff 1997, 275).⁵ The stabilization of colonial occupation in diverse corners of the British Empire resulted in – and required – the arrival of the European women to the frontier societies. And their arrival changed the societies in profound ways, restructuring and domesticating the pioneering front, in both socio-economic as well as architectural aspects (*ibid.*).⁶ As homemakers, colonial women have been seen as bringing propriety to the frontier, propriety, which was largely expressed through the paraphernalia

⁵ In what Peter Pels (1997, 173) refers to as "feminist-inspired discovery of colonial domesticity" white women's position in the colonial societies – both in regard to their position in their own patriarchal societies and in relation to their servants – has been one of the key topics. (On colonial domesticity and the master-servant relationship, see for example Hansen 1989, 1990, 1992b, 1992c; J. and J. Comaroff 1992b, 1997; Cock 1988 and Hunt 1992. White Rhodesian women within this discourse have been studied for example by Ranchod-Nilson 1992; Schmidt 1992; Pape 1990 and Kirkwood 1984.)

⁶ There is, indeed, a striking coherence in how similarly through the British Empire the white women's arrival to the pioneering fronts has been described. The European women are portrayed as embodiments of civility, as missionaries of culture both to their husbands and to the "natives." In colonial Malaya, for example, "wives stabilized the community and its standards and in so doing helped prevent white men from going "troppo" (mental) or "native," or becoming alcoholics, behaviour which "let the side down" and compromised white prestige" (Brownfoot 1984, 190). And in Southern Rhodesia, the arrival of white women joining their husbands in the early 1890's had a conspicuous effect on their menfolk: "beards were trimmed, hair was cut and the standard of dress improved" (W.D. Gale, quoted in Kirkwood 1984, 146).

and the rituality of civilized social interaction they brought along with them and which concretized and materialized the racial divide:

European women supposedly required more metropolitan amenities than men and more spacious surroundings to allow it; their more delicate sensibilities required more servants and thus suitable quarters – discrete and enclosed. In short, white women needed to be maintained at elevated standards of living, in insulated social spaces, cushioned with the cultural artefacts of “being European” (Stoler 1989a, 640).

The “full regalia” – the paraphernalia, values, etiquette and manners, conduct and upbringing, daily and weekly schedule – can be seen as a statement of who we are. But it seems to me that during the period Kevin is concerned about, this statement was not *only* about drawing and establishing racial lines but also those of class within the white Rhodesian society. Kevin uses his standardized listings to draw these lines. To ensure that I interpret his recital of homethings correctly, Kevin constantly clarifies that these lists can be summed up in one notion: *colonial*. In the first paragraph, Kevin talks about values and manners and tableware, and explains these elements by stating: “We were basically colonials.” In paragraph eleven, when he tells about the servants and notes how full-grown people were called boys and girls, he tries to justify this with a similar phrase: “You see. It was very colonial.” He also refers to colonial in more indirect ways and directions. Pink gin, which his parents used to have for “elevenses” (a pre-lunch drink reserved for weekends), was, according to Kevin, “a big thing in England and Rhodesia.” The family’s breakfast was English; for Sunday lunch they always had roast beef and Yorkshire pudding; their furniture was “Kenya-type.”

Now, what is this colonial that Kevin constantly employs as an explanatory notion and which he identifies with, with such obvious pride? In the way he uses the term, colonial simultaneously comprehends social, spatial and temporal attributes, which overlap and intersect in particular ways. That the concept *colonial* fundamentally suggests a racial identity seemed too firmly established and taken for granted for Kevin to decipher.⁷ In Kevin’s usage, colonial essentially signifies class difference – “the birds of a feather” – among the white Rhodesian population. By identifying himself and his family as colonials, he indicates an upper class, very English-oriented lifestyle – or rather, a lifestyle interpreted as “English” from the Rhodesian perspective (and from the mindset of his Irish-Scottish-South

⁷ It may be argued that the Africans were in many ways too distant to figure as significant others in the white identity play. Vincent Crapanzano (1986, 39) notes this to be the case in South Africa as well. In the identity play of both the English and the Afrikaners, the non-whites were virtually insignificant. Although their threat to the whites’ way of life was recognized, they did not as such enter the self-constituting discourse of the whites.

African parents). Although Kevin never specifies who these not-so-well-off whites in his hometown might have been, his family's lifestyle is implicitly contrasted with theirs. Thus, Kevin's claims of being *colonial* implicate an exclusive cultural category of people in colonial Rhodesia, in which case it implicitly pinpoints to ruptures and differences within the white society. It is interesting that Kevin employs the notion of colonial also as a unifying category cutting the borders of a single society. Kenya, for Kevin, seemed time and again to epitomize the highest of high in imperial civilization.⁸ In Kevin's usage, *Kenya* seems to be a synonym for an imperial upper class. Kenya for him is the "Officers' mess" in contrast to Rhodesia as the "mess of the rank" (cf., Kennedy 1987, 92). By characterizing his family through references to Kenya (i.e. that their furniture was Kenya-type) Kevin is marking the family's high social standing within the white Rhodesian society.

Divergently, particularly those who had come directly from Britain and who were from more modest backgrounds, found the lack of class difference in Rhodesia very appealing. This is what Walt, for example, emphatically stressed. He had come to Rhodesia with the Air Force during the Second World War, and repeatedly insisted on the nonexistence of class as a significant explanation to why Rhodesia was so special:

There was no class distance. There was a color bar. But there was no class distance, whereas in England there's a class distance (...) Even when I was in the Air Force we used to save our money and go to a dance at the Grand Hotel in Bulawayo, and [it was] very, very smart, except that you had hot dog stalls. It was different; you had a hot dog stall where they sell hot dogs and coffee. And from the dance the locals, of course were all dressed in their dress suits and all the rest of it, and they walked down to the hot dogs stall and all stand around eating hot dogs. Now, you wouldn't do that sort of thing in Europe. Would you? In England. So it was different. It was free and easy. And there was nothing to stop me as a lowly corporal in the Air Force, in the uniform, going and asking the mayor's daughter to dance. Or the politician's daughter. Or the prime minister's daughter. There's no class distinction. (Walt)

⁸ It is evident that Kevin's employment of the notion of colonial Kenya is familiarized through novels and films, rather than through empirical experience. According to C. J. D. Duder (1991) romantic Kenya fiction produced such a popular image of one particular corner of the British Empire, excitement, adventure, and freedom in erotic and exotic surroundings, that it in part worked to prolong and maintain a propitious image of colonialism among the public at home in Britain. And obviously not only in Britain but within the sphere of the Empire in general. This image, however, generated profound annoyance in post-colonial white Kenya (Uusihakala 1998, 117-119).

But, as I have mentioned in Part I, the social composition of the white population in Rhodesia suggests that Kevin was not altogether wrong in stressing the existence of class difference within the white community. In Rhodesian politics throughout the twentieth century the elimination of class differences among the white population was pivotal. During the colonial period, educational policy concerning the European population, for example, aimed at leveling class differences and at creating a common Rhodesian identity. (See Summers 1994 for further discussion.)

In addition, the gradually intensifying years of war and of white nationalism prior to Zimbabwe's independence further intensified the shared sense of Rhodesianness, which, to an extent, cut down differences of both class and ethnicity. For example, the Afrikaans speakers, as well as the Greeks and the Italians that were among the ex-Rhodesians I studied, were all schooled in English. Susanna, who comes from an Afrikaans-speaking family recalls:

My first day in school was absolutely traumatic. I'll never forget that because I could hardly understand what anybody was saying. So when *my* children were growing up, they grew up English because it was much easier. And all their friends and my own maid used to only speak English. They spoke English and Shona. You know the African language. And to this day they can't speak Afrikaans, even though the one daughter's down here. But I married two Englishmen so you know; I've had an English life. (Susanna)

Whereas her "English life" did not seem to confuse or bother Susanna, some others reflected on their ethnic backgrounds quite perceptively and analytically, and brought the ruptures and differences within the white society out in the open. Francesca, an acute and articulate observer, felt that her Southern European parentage, her education in a Catholic convent run by German nuns, and her growing up in a very British colonial culture amounted to a puzzling mixture: "I think multi-culturalism was really my experience, you know. Completely mixed-up things. And you don't really know where each of them comes from." Unlike most others, she also overtly addressed racial identities in colonial Rhodesia. She recalled one instance when, as a head girl of a government school in the late 1970's, she had received an anonymous letter warning against the mixing of races:

[The letter] was a whole racist tirade about where our education was going. Because I think at that point, sort of -78, there were moves to make education non-racial (...) And obviously the right wing were kind of trying to warn off this thing. And this letter was about the danger of getting other races, mixing with other races. They said something about: "Look at the wild animals in the *veld*. They graze together but they don't mate." That's what they were insinuating. I mean I was doing biology

and I knew the difference between like species! I mean people are the same species but animals are different species! And then the other thing they were saying about, something about how we must be *proud* of our white race. You know, and our lovely, I don't know what, something about lovely straight hair or something. Now, I have always had a very, very curly hair. In fact me and all the colored girls at the convent used to spend Friday nights straightening, straightening, straightening. So I mean I thought this letter is just (...) I mean this letter came to a completely wrong person! (Francesca)

“The Full Regalia” – Organization of Time and Space at Home

Building house

Kevin remembers a series of childhood homes in the 1950's and 1960's. His family moved regularly, but always within the same small town. In his story, he does not seem to have a particular house in mind, but rather a mixture of several of them. The moves, however, do not figure at all in his story. What he remembers is a home rather than a house. His home – like that of most ex-Rhodesians, who moved regularly inside the country – is thereby a notion, which can be thought of as implying an emotional attachment and meaning that extend beyond the physical frames of any particular house.

Kevin was born into such a well established home that his story lacks the plot of early house building and meager beginnings, which so religiously embellish settler memoirs. “There are two sorts of habitation in Africa,” Doris Lessing writes. “One is of brick, cement, plaster, tile and tin – the substance of the country processed and shaped; the other sort is made direct of the stuff of soil and grass and tree” (1982, 38). Lessing describes in detail the building of the latter kind of a house in which she had lived as a child in colonial Rhodesia. The building of such pole and dagga houses with cow-dung floors and thatched roofs is a central, recurring theme in settler memoirs. For example:

Our first home was a two-roomed, wood and iron shack in which we had to live until we could get one of the small brick cottages that were being built [on Umvuma mine in the 1910's] (...) We had a wood-stove in the kitchen and the water-cart would come daily and leave me six buckets of water, which was for baths and everything (...) Then people began to come to live on the mine, mostly in corrugated iron huts or makeshift mud huts with roofs and a verandah all round to keep the rain off. The floors were covered with cow-dung with thick milk rubbed into it. It became as hard as cement and made a nice floor. It was not possible to put a carpet or linoleum on top of

it because white ants would eat it overnight. We had to put our table legs in tins of water, and also our makeshift safe in which we kept our food (Memoirs of Mrs. Frame in *Down Memory Lane*...1979, 144-145).

There is a continuum of similar house-building stories carrying onto the 1950's. While Kevin's parents were "buying and selling property like it was going out of fashion," others were building houses out of "soil and grass and tree," perhaps with bits of "brick, cement, plaster, tile and tin." David tells about the beginnings of his family's home up in the Inyanga mountains:

There was one very old house there. Sort of corrugated iron house that was rat infested and it was sort of falling apart. And we actually dismantled that and built our own place, used parts of it for our roof and everything. [Our house] was built out of stone, pole and dagga, that sort of stuff. We were obviously just trying to save money. We couldn't afford cement. Except for sort of floors and that. No electricity, it was paraffin lamps and gas lamps ultimately. We had a wood stove. In fact initially just used to have wood fire on and that we used to cook on. So it was very pioneering. (David)

A missionary in the Zambezi valley during the 1950's tells a similar story:

All our building material had to come from the forest. You had to cut them, you had to peel the *mopane* wood off, skins off, dry them, cure them. I didn't have electric or generated, it was building those days by hand and it was hard. The houses were made of mud brick. Brick that was made, you would employ Africans to work for you, those who wanted to work, and you'd make a Kimberley brick. It was about 12 by, about that size, quite big, and sun-dried and you could build a house very quickly. No ceilings, you cut the grass, elephant grass in the bush, in the dry season and depending on how much time you want to spend, you could comb it and thatch it properly. Some of the Africans knew how to do that, or you could just cut it straight and dry it and bundle it. (Geoff)

In such memories of house-building, there is a strong sense of marking the place with the work of one's own hands. The building directly out of the stuff of the soil did have to do with economic means, as David reminds us, but its subsequent remembering digs such building to a level deeper than surface. Making do with what the soil could offer is about rootedness to land. But it is not merely a question of an individual's or even a family's sense of place. It also has to do with linking or conjoining oneself to the pioneer ideals and pioneer ways of doing things, thus establishing a link between oneself and the pioneering ancestors. In many accounts the pioneer moral ideal of freedom and individuality is strongly emphasized. Alastair, who

had a farm in Zimbabwe until the late 1980's and had continued farming in South Africa, emphasizes the luxury of building as you please:

One of the things I enjoyed most was building or putting up your own buildings, you know, you didn't have to get permission or anything. If you wanted to put up a building, you made your own bricks on the farm, obviously you had to buy the cement, the sand you got from the farm. From the riverbeds. Anything you wanted to do, you did yourself. Which was great! Anything in Britain, you know, is done usually by somebody else. If your tractor broke down and there was nobody to mend it, you had to mend it yourself. And that meant you had to be able to weld, take an engine apart, put it together. And that was another excitement. (Alastair)

In addition to making one's mark on the ground – a mark sometimes almost frightfully transient as David's depiction of a decomposed house I have discussed in Part II shows – the building thus emphasizes some most valued characteristics in ex-Rhodesian self-analysis: ingenuity, making do with very little, being inventive and able. Kevin's story contradicts these values radically. "In those days Rhodesian men were quite lazy," he says. "They never fixed things around the house." His father would never sand and paint a door; he would have someone else do it. This is a statement, which most of the people I spoke with would strongly oppose and be offended by. Kevin's version of "Rhodesian character" has to be considered as particular to his family and the family's social status, which he constantly emphasizes. It also underlines the ambiguity behind affirmative generalizations of "Rhodesian character," which were so superfluous in the self-analysis of the community. But what is more, it needs to be considered in the relationship to the intention with which he is telling the story. The wholeness of home Kevin attempts to present does not seem to allow for anything unfinished or in the making. Contradictory to Kevin's view most people offered innumerable little stories and anecdotes of a do-it-yourself-spirit. In addition to building houses, they made furniture out of petrol tins and packing-cases, from "gelignite boxes, broom handles, saplings from the bush and dry grass for stuffing" (*Memoirs of Mrs. Kitto in Down Memory Lane* 1979, 199-200).

It needs to be emphasized that most of the people I talked with (or their ancestors) had come to Rhodesia with fairly little in terms of furniture and other luggage.⁹ Thus, instead of trunk-loads of shipped antique, people,

⁹ A large number of white immigrants who came to Rhodesia directly from Britain came in the armed forces during the Second World War. Most people I talked with did not, however, come as military officers of high social standing. They came as pilots, army police and so on. After the end of the war, they were given the possibility to stay in Rhodesia. Quite a few stayed right on, possessing very little in terms of furniture or other items brought from Britain.

particularly women, seem to have brought along a few decorative pieces in addition to their ability to beautify boxes to resemble as closely as possible “real furniture” at home. Walt, for example, tells how he and his newly-wed wife direct from England began their married life in post-Second World War Rhodesia with meager resources. Neither one of them had brought any furniture from England:

She didn't like the fact that we were quite poor because we had 60 pounds between us when we got married. We managed to buy ourselves a bed and couple of chairs and the rest we used paraffin boxes. We used to buy square tins, five gallons of paraffin, and if you bought two tins, they came in a wooden box. And those wooden boxes, that was our furniture. And we hinged the lid so the lid would lift up and then she would sew by hand a nice padded top, a few old stockings and clothes in that and cloth around it so that this you sat on (...) We had a wood and iron house. The way they built these houses was first of all they put pieces of railway line in the ground about three or four feet. Because that's to keep the white ants off, the white ants would eat wood like crazy. And then on top of that they make a wooden framework and on the outside of the framework they would nail corrugated iron invertedly. On the inside they'd nail strips of wood vertically and then they'd paint it. And the railways only had two colors. It was yellow and green. So you could have whatever color scheme you wanted when they painted your house as long as it was yellow or green. It was a creamy sort of a yellow and medium green. (Walt)

In contrast, the British colonial administrators and military officers to India or Kenya for example, often equipped themselves with as many of the most comfortable furnishings that their servants could carry.¹⁰ Such was also the case of civilians of high social standing, like Kevin's paternal grandfather, who was a medical doctor. The refinery Kevin so emphatically describes had primarily come from his father's side, and had been consequently inherited by Kevin's sister.¹¹

¹⁰ An officer in a high social position during the Victorian and Georgian period presumed he would enjoy the standard of living he was used to at home whilst *en voyage* and at his remote station. “This meant taking along desks, chairs, settees, dining tables, bookcases, wash stands, games tables and chests” (Wemyss 2002, 22). Wemyss notes that there was no tax on furniture taken from England to India as personal baggage, which meant that the military officers were taking along “prodigious quantities” (ibid.).

¹¹ The fact that Kevin's sister had inherited the “Georgian silver” and apparently most of the furniture and decorations of their childhood home was not the plan Kevin's father had had in mind. “My sister's got most of it. My sister inherited everything. Ok, we didn't inherit. Boys didn't inherit (...) My father, the way they

"We love brass, good brass, old brass." The interior decor of civilization

Kevin enlivened our discussions and animated his reminiscences with photographs. In one of them, his mother sits upright and self-confident in a rose-printed, soft, but well-sprung armchair. Delicate and posed she smiles to the camera holding a glass of brandy. Behind her a hardwood liquor cabinet is open. The top shelves are filled with sparkling crystal glasses that catch the flash of the camera. On the top of the cabinet are framed photographs of family weddings. A walled-up whitewashed fireplace has porcelain dolls and tiny figurines on the top mantelpiece. A massive shiny brass vase holds a tall cream-colored thinly smoking candle. The beautifully hung mauve curtains are drawn, their color matching exactly the hues of the lampshades. Kevin describes the picture:

Now, this is my mother. You can see the type of furniture that we had: Toby jugs¹² and beautiful pictures. And then she's sitting amongst her refinery. You see what I'm talking about, the Sanderson.¹³ What I was telling you is all true, you know. That's like a little cocktail cabinet with all the glasses, and beautiful antiques and brassware and Sanderson linen and silverware.

In Kevin's memories of home, it is the furnishing and decorative objects that build up the ambiance of home, and they do so not only in aesthetic but also in a moral sense. In his narrative, the beautiful home, where there was "every opportunity of being brought up the right way," is a moral concept; a beautiful home is clean, decent and proper. In her analysis of Norwegian homes, Marianne Gullestad similarly suggests that it is "through the aesthetics that a vision of a moral order is created and expressed" (1992, 79; see also Gullestad 1984). The beautiful, the good and the old are clearly expressive of more than the exquisiteness of the silver and the brass. The beautiful home, epitomizing and expressing civilization, also seems to filter such attributes into those inhabiting it.

This idea of transformative power of built environment, the home in particular, has long and rather well established roots in Western thought. During the British Romantic era, which began in the early eighteenth century, the built environment was seen as providing a general framework

worked was, you died, you left everything to your wife. When your wife died, she left it for the boys but not for the girl. Because he believed that the girl's husband's father would do the right thing by him. So everybody would get a chance. But as it turned out, I got a little bit when my dad died. Then my mother gave me the odd things while she was alive. And then she, when she died, I was in South Africa and my brother was up there, but she actually gave everything to my sister."

¹² Toby jugs are ceramic jugs crafted in the form of a seated, jovial male figure often with a mug in his one hand and a pipe in another.

¹³ Sanderson is an interior design company established in the UK in 1860. It is especially known for its floral furnishing fabrics.

for a sense of self, manipulating consciousness. By the 1830's, Katherin Grier (1988, 5, cit. Taylor 1999, 227) argues, the popular discourse on the domestic "assigned to the house's physical setting and details the power to shape human character (...). This 'domestic environmentalism' conflated moral guidance with the actual appearance and physical layout of the house and its contents." Taylor argues that the cult of domesticity and the belief that the physical layout and decor of the house had a power to produce and reproduce middle-class civility reached its zenith in the Victorian era. The middle-class parlor, in particular, was meant to civilize both the children and the working class.¹⁴

In his narrative, Kevin focuses on the description of the lounge, the room which is most public. Although it is the room the main function of which is family relaxation (rather than more strictly defined cooking, eating, washing, sleeping), it is also the most un-intimate, the most presentable room, the room where the guests are met. If I were to visit this home other than through Kevin's story, this is the room where I would be seated if the weather did not permit us to sit outside on the veranda. The lounge is the display room, which should most clearly establish both the identity of the house as well as the status of its inhabitants.¹⁵ In addition to the smoothness and shininess of the texture – the velvety touch of the carpet and the glimmer of the crystal – a significant factor in the decoration is its spotless order. Each little ornament looks perfectly polished, and each seems to have its balanced place in the total design.

The arrangement and texture of objects at Kevin's place – visible in the photographs and emphatically listed in Kevin's stories – show a desire for an appearance or a display, which is luxurious rather than cozy. This is expressed, for example, in the scale of material surfaces. In the pioneer homes people so lovingly remember, the surfaces were natural and rough;

¹⁴ The idea that the built environment in general and houses in particular may have transformative power was very much in effect in the colonial frontier during the same period. Belief in the power of the domestic environment prevailed in the missionary efforts to convert and to civilize Africans. Jean and John Comaroff note that the Nonconformist missionaries in colonial Bechuanaland, like imperialists elsewhere, sought first to "impose the square on the primitivist arc. They were determined to rationalize the undifferentiated chaos of "native" society by laying upon it the rectangular grid of civilization" (1992b, 53). To the missionary eye the layout of Tswana circular houses lacked proper division between human and animal life, between private and public, and between individuated property. The design of missionary stations set off the domestic from the public and the religious from the secular. Sleeping, sitting, cooking, and dining each required a discrete space.

¹⁵ The "open house" hospitality so much emphasized in colonial Rhodesia, also put pressure to the public nature of home. Karen Hansen (1989, 66-69) argues that the colonial household was never really a private space. A properly managed colonial household was part of civilized society and as such it was on permanent display, open to other whites for inspection.

floors were of cow dung and the walls of mud. Kevin's home is at the other end of the spectrum, where the surfaces are soft and smooth and polished. Carpets cover floors from edge to edge and drapes frame the windows one hundred percent. Instead of pieces of furniture self-made from rough wooden boxes and boards, Kevin's home had imported antique pieces, designer linen and fabric made to match as ensembles with evocative titles such as *Promise* and *Abundance*.¹⁶ The same scale exists for the subjects of pictures. Instead of "African kraals," which presumably would show Africans with their dwellings and cattle, the paintings in Kevin's house would be serene, picturesque landscapes in shades that would match and emphasize the general color scheme of the decor.

Bodily behavior and the style of objects go hand in hand in the scale as well. They are, like Mary Douglas marks, mapped on each other: "Subtle gestures, gentle voices, no wild arm-waving, such restrained comportment is projected on to smooth surfaces, soft curves, well equilibrated shapes and conversely" (1996, 64). Kevin's mother's posture and delicate gestures, her poise and dignity that ooze from the photograph are inseparable from the overall image. The objects and things Kevin lists are clearly status objects, whose value lies not in their utility as such. These are elements that belong to the top end of the scale when it comes to surfaces or textures ranging from rough to smooth and polished; and to value ranging from common and cheap to rare and exquisite. These objects enhance and represent the relative position of the family in relation to other people in the society.

What emerges from Kevin's lists of homethings, are not so much single meaningful objects, whose value would lie in their particularly vivacious histories, or in the stories of hands through which they had passed. Rather, the meaning of any particular object lies in the part it plays in the totality, or the scheme, of domestic decor. Kevin's listing portrays items and elements that belong together in the cultural category of a "nice home," a wholesome home. They can be comprehended only as parts of an ensemble. Together such elements seem to form a comprehensible whole. To understand which things go together, let us look at Kevin's rejection of items that seem to violate the wholeness.

No Africanization. All right, there were trees, the msasa trees (...) We'd leave the indigenous trees but we'd incorporate with beautiful carnations.

No! no, not at all. No soapstone. Nothing. Nothing at all. And if you ask me what are my pet hates, if somebody gives me a curio from Africa, I will hit them over their head with it.

But absolutely, definitely no curios. No, no, no, no, no (...) Certainly no curio would tie up with that. No ways.

¹⁶ See Sanderson online at <http://www.sanderson-online.co.uk/recentcollections/english.htm>

Kevin rejects things that can be categorized as “African”: indigenous plants in the garden and African art or touristy curios as decorative items. In this sense, the African elements may be considered as “matter out of place” (Douglas, e.g., 1991b [1975], 50), something that “blur[s], smudge[s], contradict[s] or otherwise confuse[s] accepted classifications” (ibid., 51). The African elements, in other words, are things that do not “tie up” with the whole. Kevin’s scheme of proper decoration of home, of that which goes into a cultural category of a “nice home,” is considerably stricter than that of most others. Rather than representing a curious exception, however, it shows to me the putting to individual use the culturally shared knowledge of what constitutes a “proper Rhodesian home.”

In the act of decorating people draw on, or negate, cultural, social, aesthetic and technical knowledge available to them to various degrees (e.g., Clarke 2001, 26). People communicate with such knowledge through personal choices that they make about home decoration. Ethnicization, as a decorative style, is widely available for the consumer in the affluent West today,¹⁷ and quite prominently marketed in South African home decoration magazines¹⁸ as well as in the expensive and sophisticated upper-class interior decoration stores in bigger cities, such as Cape Town, Pretoria and Johannesburg. The mixing and matching of objects that connote to quite distinct periods and places is a question of simultaneous embracing and rejecting of “otherness” at home. It is an essential element in these fashionable decorative styles. But these trends did not appeal to Kevin in the least.

The exterior decor – the garden

The lawn is the carpet of a garden. Shrubs and trees could be called the furniture. More and more, the garden is being introduced into the house and the house into the garden. It is not always possible to draw a line and say, “This is where my

¹⁷ But, Tony Chapman notes, the idea and practice of mixing and matching objects and architectural and decorative symbols were already well established by upper-middle-class Victorians, who valued exotic and eclectic things (2001, 138).

¹⁸ The ethnicization, the mixing and matching of objects and styles – “European heritage and ethnic cultures” – is the most conspicuous trend in these magazines today: “Earthy tones combined with splashes of vibrant colour and contrasting textures create a harmonious fusion of styles based on sophisticated African ambience (...)”, reads an advert of one interior decoration store near Durban (Kodelitsch 2002, 40). The “South African” style presented in these magazines may combine elements for instance of the “township look,” the “Kenya look” or the “Out of Africa-look” (a mix of safari and colonial), or the mixture of Cape Dutch with Ndebele beadwork. In the opinion of one interior designer, SA style is not to be confused with an African look. The essence lies in the layering and combining of distinct “roots.” “Our way of decorating is more sophisticated, for instance combining silks with wood and leather” (Harris 2002, 42).

indoor living ends and my outdoor living starts' (Wood 1986 [1975]: Gardening in Zimbabwe).

The same cultural code that operates inside the house is at work outside as well. Like the house, the garden at Kevin's place was always immaculate. What this means is that it was properly ordered with surfaced, paved driveways instead of gravel and dust. Instead of indigenous vegetation, roses and carnations, annuals and bi-annuals were grown. The *msasa* trees¹⁹ comprised the only "indigenous" element in this garden. For grass to become a lawn, it cannot be let to grow and wither according to the flow of seasons. Instead, the lawn at Kevin's place was bordered and shaped and the grass manicured every other day, so that it was both neat to look at and velvety for bare feet to touch, just like the wall-to-wall carpet inside, in the lounge. In a study of gardens in an English suburb, Sophie Chevalier (1998) observes that there is symmetry between interior decor and the garden, and it is best expressed in the grass/carpet analogy. In the center of these two spaces the woolen carpet echoes the grass carpet in the garden. Citing Mukerji (1990), she notes that in European history of gardens, they were extensions of the house in architecture as well as in decoration. Chevalier argues that the view from the house creates a bridge between these two spaces. Ideally, the furniture of the lounge is arranged in such a way as to offer the best view of the garden, an illusion that one is really outside (1998, 52).

In colonial Rhodesia, thanks to the climate, the boundary between the garden and the house is simultaneously less and more emphatic than it is in an English suburb. On the one hand, in the scorching heat of the dry season, the outside has to be kept out. To keep the inside reasonably cool, the colonial white Rhodesian houses (some of them modeled on the South African Cape Dutch style, others prototypes of British colonial bungalows) often had relatively small windows and a *stoep* – a shady veranda around the house, both of which helped to keep the heat outside.²⁰ On the other hand, the garden could be used as an extension of the lounge throughout the year. The garden was not admired from inside the house, but from the

¹⁹ *Msasa* (*Brachystegia spiciformis*) is probably the best-known indigenous shade tree in Zimbabwe. Its flowers are insignificant, but its young spring foliage (August to September) of orange and red has a floral effect (Wood 1986 [1975]).

²⁰ The veranda has been considered as the epitome of colonial architecture. In a book about South African historical houses, Graham Viney (1997) writes: "Regency architecture and, with it, that uniquely English and astonishingly pervasive and protracted penchant for the Picturesque bequeathed the verandah house to the Empire. In Africa, India and Australia the cottage ornee, initially the products of a fashionable metropolitan whimsy, found in the veld, jungle or outback a location more truly rustic than a landscaped park, and the verandah – an architectural conceit borrowed from the empire, reworked and exported back again – a purpose more useful than as an architectural embellishment in Brighton or Cheltenham."

veranda The furniture on the veranda would be arranged in such a way as to offer the best view to the garden (and to its very common centerpiece in homes such as Kevin's – the swimming pool) and beyond, preferably to pristine nature.

The garden is a very powerful metaphor in Western thought, a symbol of civilization, of methodical human tending to the "natural" environment.²¹ As discussed in Part II, the archetypal landscapes, which may be seen to go back to ancient Greece and Rome, imply a moral narrative about people's intensifying interference with nature (Cosgrove 1995, 282). In Virgil's natural cycle, the middle landscape, that of the garden, is considered as the firmest base of human community. According to Cosgrove, "[Gardens] are landscapes of domestic economy, of the loving family and the private life of citizens. They are landscapes of labour, to be sure, but of labour that honours and complements natural processes, at one with the hours and seasons" (ibid., 296). The history of gardening in England reveals how the borders between gardens and wilderness shifted through the years and how the opposition of "natural" and "formal" was carved onto the ground. Christopher Thacker (1979, 184; 200-201) marks that in the eighteenth century England, the rediscovery of nature took place largely via the garden. In the construction of English landscape gardens, the sublime (the rough and the rugged) and the beautiful (the regular, delicate and harmonious) were both seen as necessary elements to give variety, which completes the landscape.

Kevin's "top end" solidity regarding gardens was quite exceptional. Most Rhodesian gardens simultaneously featured elements, which can be categorized as sublime (mainly rough rock formations and *kopjes*) and the beautiful: flowerbeds, shrubs, mown lawns, and so forth. People incorporated these elements in very personal ways; Norman's piece of wilderness in the middle of manicured lawn is one apt example. Ian, a long-standing member of the Rhodesian Aloe and Succulent Society reflected that indigenous gardening, and especially aloes, had become fashionable in Rhodesia already in the 1950's, and the exchange of aloe seeds and flame lily²² bulbs actively continued in the ex-Rhodesian community. In South

²¹ In the Nonconformist missionary discourse and practice, Jean and John Comaroff note, the gardens, like the houses, were believed to have transformative potential. They were tilled to give guidance to the local people both in relation to the sense of aesthetic order, the perfect appropriation of space, and to the ideal of creating a society of independent peasant households, each cultivating their private properties. Missionary discourse relied heavily on horticultural metaphors, evoking the recreation of the spoiled English garden in Africa's "vast moral wastes" (Moffat 1842, 614, cit. Comaroff and Comaroff 1991, 80). The countryside would be tilled and planted anew - cultivating the heathen workers as they cultivated the soil (ibid.; see also Comaroff and Comaroff 1997, 127; 133).

²² Flame lily (*Gloriosa Superba* L.) was the unofficial national flower of Rhodesia (e.g., Plowes & Drummond 1976; Bell 1996, 2). As a floral emblem of Rhodesia,

Africa today, the gardening trend seems also to be shifting towards the indigenous, and there is a drive to eradicate alien species. In this trend the idea is to use endemic species in the garden in a way that ideally the garden would blend into the surrounding “pristine” nature as its manicured version.

Like clockwork – the routine ways of home

It takes great care for a lawn to become and to remain velvety and smooth. It needs to be watered, fertilized, bordered, shaped, weeded and mown. In this sense, the lawn is no different from other domestic elements portrayed in Kevin’s narrative. The meaning of the objects Kevin lists is reflected and made by regular attendance and care: “The silver was pulled out every week and polished and the brass.” Under the hazardous sun, the grass burns easily, and, conversely, during the rainy season the garden may quickly turn into a jungle. Thus, the attendance needs to be planned, organized and regular. Likewise, the fragility and weakness of crystal, and the regular polishing that precious material needs to remain aesthetically pleasing, give these objects a particular value beyond their utility. Affluence is not only expressed by the material value of the objects but also by the time and energy put in their care. Thus, the meaning of the arrangement of material objects has to be realized through domestic practice, through care taking and maintaining.

What ties these domestic objects, the care they require, and the gardening practices to broader relationships of power within the colonial society is the fact that the regular maintenance work behind the display of a well-ordered house was carried out by African servants. In the anthropological discourse of colonial cultures, the analysis of the encounter between the colonizer and the colonized has been prominently explored in master-servant relationships. White women’s work in the colonial home required organizational skills regarding the day-to-day division of labor within the household, which was based on racial lines. According to Karen Hansen, the racial stratification of colonial society was supported in part by mechanisms for maintaining distance. In her analysis of master-servant relationship in colonial Northern Rhodesia, the power in the colonial home can be located in social practices that in time become predictable and routinized. Power in this context is seen as the ability to combine practices and routines in particular ways (Hansen 1989, 12-14). However, the access to power within this relationship is explicitly unequal. Although distance and disdain can be practiced by servant and master alike, “the employer is the more autonomous actor owing to the more effective means

it can be seen embroidered on caps, t-shirts and jerseys; pictured on stickers, pins, badges and brooches, which are all sold through ex-Rhodesian associations as well as through e-shops that advertise on and operate through Rhodesian web-pages.

of compliance at his or her command" (ibid., 12). Therefore, the master and the servant can at best be "distant companions," or as "company" but only in quotation marks" (Duder and Youé 1994, 278).

Whenever the topic of servants came up in my discussions with the ex-Rhodesians, it always seemed to arouse feelings of uneasiness, ambiguity and defense. It was also about the only instance when black persons – other than politicians – were named and spoken of as individuals. The fact that adult men and women were referred to as "boys" and "girls" necessitated constant clarification. For instance, Marjorie, a woman in her late fifties, who had come to Rhodesia as a single young woman in the 1960's, reminisces:

We had three permanent servants. We had a groom and a garden boy and a houseboy. When I say "boy" – a man in the house, until I had two daughters and decided that it wasn't, and so we had a maid, a full-time maid. A "girl," who actually was much older than I was. (Marjorie)

"We got on well with our natives; they were our friends but there was a line," Kevin said. Servants were people in a peculiar position; in a way were regarded as members of the household but then again they were not. In many cases the servants had stayed in the family for decades. At the time of the emigration, most of the people I talked with had taken care to see that their servants had a new job waiting for them. Some still kept in contact with their long-time servants, and those who had lost touch with them were clearly distraught. However, like Kevin says, there was always a line. Servants were housed on the property but in their separate quarters (*kias*) in the back of the garden, where they would often have their own small garden. Although it was not always strictly supervised, Rhodesian policy of racial segregation did not allow the servants to bring their families permanently to residential areas classified as European. Because it was usually African men who worked as servants in white families, this meant that African women and children stayed behind in the rural areas, classified as African. In a very feudal manner, the servants' salaries were often paid both in cash and kind. At Kevin's place:

We had a cook who was with us for twenty-five years. We had a nanny, a house girl cum nanny. She was with us for thirty-five years. And garden boys, they changed quite frequently. And they used to earn, in those days, a cook used to earn about fifty dollars a month, a house girl about thirty-five and a garden boy thirty. Plus they used to get a full compliment of *mealie* meal, plus they used to get like *boys' meat*, they used to call it. Ok, it was a lower grade meat supplied. And then they were given a patch of the garden to grow cabbages and things like that. There were three servants' quarters at the back. (Kevin)

Thus, the mechanisms of distance at home required spatial segregation, which divided and defined the home plot into family areas and servants' areas. It distinguished family food from servants' food; it defined the use of cooking utensils used for preparing these meals and so forth. Such segregation works to maintain and clarify social definitions. Because the physical presence of the servants inside the house was required throughout the day, the social mechanisms of distance prescribing etiquette and comportment were significant.

The internalization of such mechanisms of distance is well demonstrated by the punctual bell and careful choreography of a meal in Kevin's narrative. The meal concretizes the social relationships of the household, including the servants. Just as every object had its precisely defined place in the home, so too were the days punctuated by carefully ordered and served meals. Every single night the bell that called for sundowners would ring religiously on time to mark the end of the working day and the beginning of leisure. And then the bell would ring again to call for supper. It is self-evident that the routine, which is so pivotal in the propriety of the home, requires the punctual performance of each actor. It is the mother who has planned the meal and organized its preparation. It is the providing father who is given the most visible and centrally placed part of the meal: the carving of the meat. And it is the cook who has prepared the meal and serves it. His is a performance, which, if it is to be considered proper, needs to be subdued, agentless, as it were. Kevin used a passive voice to demonstrate this: "The table was cleared, the dishes were put away." Here Kevin's solid story stumbled somewhat. He obviously considered that I might find the concept of "servant" belittling and struggled to find a more suitable notion: "They weren't servants as we know. But they were helpers."²³

In totality, the routinized ways and performances of proper homeness, the careful etiquette of the meal was so internalized, so embodied, that as Kevin was remembering it he corrected his posture straightening his back and placing his hands on his lap. The routine is also articulated in Kevin's narrative style, which expresses something essential about the process of remembering and the intention with which he is telling the story. In my mind, the narrative form and its content go in tandem. The linguistic means Kevin employs emphasize the intention and meaning of the narrative. In spite of Kevin's exceptional ability to conjure up a house, which seems so alive one can almost see it, touch it, and smell it, there is still a puzzling sense of sterility in the story. It is as if he is depicting an ideal layout, a façade as it were, a silvery frame within which a well-mannered

²³ I pushed him a little further, enquiring about the servants' working hours but did not, in this interview situation, challenge him about the apparent inconsistencies. A more thorough understanding of the servant-employer relationship, in my mind, would necessitate a study of both categories of social actors, which is beyond the scope of this work.

and perfectly equipped life could be lived, but the presence of which is somehow in the shadow in his narrative. This, I suggest, has to do with the process of remembering from afar and with the intention of presenting the past home as a wholesome whole. The past home is remembered as a totality in which things and acts have their prescribed places. It is a wholeness that can only be perceived from a distance, when it is no longer a lived phenomenal reality.

The intention in narrative is reflected and brought out through expressive means. Throughout his story, Kevin mostly employs the modal verb *would* in describing the well-ordered and scheduled home-life. In paragraph two, for example: "They [the parents] *would* be sitting," "the bell *would* ring," "they *would* have their sundowners," and "the bell *would* ring again." *Would* is generally used to talk about something that happened *regularly* in the past, but *no longer happens* (Collins Cobuild English Grammar 1994). Thus, he is not telling a story of a particular evening, a particular happening; he is telling how things were done *ordinarily*. Kevin's use of the modal "would" indicates a particular attitude towards what he is saying, as well as concern about what the effect of his story might have on me, as an outsider listening to his story. His wistfulness for the wholeness of home is also expressed in the use of "would," which is a "would" indicating possibility. Thus, in places Kevin's use of "would" might be interpreted as referring to actions and events, which *were possible* in the past, although they did not actually happen, at least not with the regularity he emphasizes. For example, during another discussion we had, Kevin mentions that in actuality his mother and father did *not* sit down for sundowners every single night of their life. In fact his father was a clubman:

My father was a clubman, golf club, sports club. But my father also never used to come home, sometimes during the week; there were quite a few nights of the week that he wouldn't come home for that sundowner we spoke about. He would just go out with the boys. (Kevin)

Now, my intention is not to demonstrate that such memories or their representations are false, or, on the other hand, that they are the objective reality of how things really were in actuality. They are real for the people invoking these memories, and they are real in a particular narrative context of remembering. The "would" or "used to" indicates past regular activity which has ceased. The diasporic context of remembering coats remembered events with a wholeness; it orders happenings into habituality.

Kevin's scheme of homethings – home decoration and routine home practices – as markers of family status, are part and parcel of narrative self-interpretation. The organization and ordering of elements of home are employed in order to demonstrate who we are. Kevin's narrative and other home stories above indicate differentiation in the category of the colonial and variety in the category of the colonial home. They exemplify the

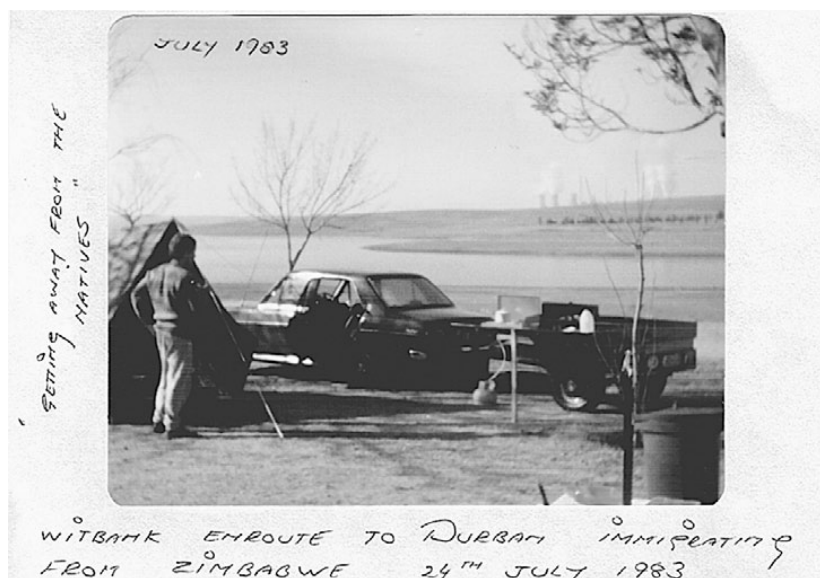
heterogeneity, the plurality of ideas, visions and their expressions within the settler community. Kevin's scheme of homethings shows how the spatial, temporal and emotional aspects of home become condensed in material objects. If Kevin's inventory of homethings, the repeated listing of objects and elements as well as the emphasis on order and regularity, pointed out variance and rupture in the category of colonial home, from the diasporic position the homethings come to speak of that which is same and shared: the different agendas of the colonials combine into a "we-experience," a sharable notion of a Rhodesian home. In diaspora, the sets and wholes that these objects form create a sense of permanence and continuity. I will now turn to the analysis of how the home was transported and re-formed in and after emigration. The shared experiences of breaking up homes and of reconstructing them, as well as the similar displays of Rhodesiana at the diasporic homes, further unify what is remembered as home.

2. "ALMOST LIKE HOME"

Taking the Gap

In 1983 Kevin had had enough of Zimbabwe and he decided to "take the gap," to leave home, and immigrate to South Africa. He explains the situation in Zimbabwe at the time:

And then it started. Emigrating. Every party I went to, whites leaving. Eventually there were no white girls there (...) Then suddenly I looked at the whole thing. I thought there's no future here. By that stage I said: "No, look, I must go." Because there was no more white girls. You're driving through this street and you'd say: "Oh, there's a white, oh no, it's an albino!" So anyway I decided to come. I said: "Ok, I'm going." With a car, with a trailer, I had a tent. I went and stayed in a caravan park. That's how I started. I went and stayed in a caravan park. I lived like a hermit in a bush. In a caravan park. I arrived here at 33 with 500 Rand. 500 bucks. Like a boy starting school at 18. I've been 18 twice. I was 18 when I was 18 and I was 18 when I was 33. And it's taken this time now to get a little bit comfortable. And if I don't like it here, I'm gonna have to be 18 till I die. That's it. (Kevin)



Picture 2: Kevin emigrates²⁴

Kevin showed me the above photograph every single time we met. Of all the photos in his album, this particular gapping picture seemed to encompass the emigration experience of not only him, but of white Rhodesia in general. He explained the picture, time and again, repeating himself almost word for word:

This is an interesting shot. July 1983, Witbank *en route* to Durban, emigrating from Zimbabwe, 24th of July. All we were allowed to bring, I told you, all I was allowed to bring was 500 Rand and everything I owned, I possessed, had to be over seven years old or else I couldn't bring it. So that's why I bought this old, it's like a new car, I did it up, and I put a little, matching little trailer on the back. There's my tent, there's my *braai*. I came and lived in caravan parks to start. (Kevin)

In the picture it is July and mid-winter in South Africa. The overcast sky, the nearly naked trees, the sturdy winter grass and the calm and quiet river seem to chill the picture, to numb it. The sense of desolation and of loneliness oozing from the image is intensified by Kevin's position

²⁴ This picture is from a special album, where Kevin had selected some photographs, each with accompanying handwritten small notes. These were pictures, which Kevin considered as condensing his life: "Telling my life better than words." Kevin narrated his life through his cars; he remembered the most significant moments of his life by recalling the vehicles he had driven at the time. Thus, in Kevin's *auto-biography*, vehicles operated as mnemonic tools.

both in the photograph and in his inscription. He stares into the pipe-marked horizon with suspicion, as if on guard. He stands by his tent, his momentary shelter. He is surrounded by the most significant possessions he has gapped with: the car, the trailer, the tent, and the *braai* – possessions that allow him to be mobile and self-sufficient on the road.

The ex-Rhodesians often refer to their experience of emigrating through the metaphor of gapping, which very appropriately describes the experience. According to the Collins Cobuild English Dictionary (1995):

- 1) A *gap* is a space between two things or a hole in the middle of something solid.
- 2) A *gap* is a period of time when you are not busy or when you stop doing something that you normally do.
- 3) If there is something missing from a situation that prevents it being complete or satisfactory you can say that there is a *gap*.

A gap is thus a space between two apparent solids. It is an abnormal period of time. It is a situation, where something significant – a home – is missing. In other words, when the ex-Rhodesians speak of gapping, they refer to a specific space, a particular period of time and a key event. Recollections of the gap were, more often than not, brief and prompt, factual and unemotional. This very brevity, silence even, speaks for those who share the experience. Usually the emigration narratives were silent about the actual journey. Most of the people I talked with had driven down to South Africa in their own vehicles and, unlike the people who were immigrating to far-off places like Australia or New Zealand, the ones gapping to South Africa, knew very well what they were coming to. The white Rhodesians had regularly visited family and friends in South Africa or spent their holidays on its shores, either in Durban or on the Cape peninsula.²⁵ The migrants driving down south knew the road, they knew the time it would take them to cover the distance. They knew where they would stop to have lunch and to refuel.

But the solid silence laid on the road of departure can only partly be explained by its familiarity, for they spoke with warmth and detail about the familiar roads of home. In a sense, the emigration road seems to exist in a gap; it is in-between solids, that is, places of significance. It is traveled in a time, when one had stopped doing things one normally does, and when one hasn't yet begun to do those normal things again. In that sense the lack of narrative of the journey corresponds to how Jessica Dubow analyzes journal writings of the sea voyage to the Cape of Good Hope.

²⁵ Fish Hoek, a small sea-side pensioner town on the road to the Cape of Good Hope, was referred to as "Rhodesia-by-the-sea." There used to be a hotel by that name in Fish Hoek, and holidays from Rhodesia were sponsored by the Rhodesian State Lottery "for those who weren't quite so well off as others" (Storry 1990, 11).

She notes that while the journals of travelers to the Cape include vivid accounts of the scene of departure, “[S]hipboard experience itself registers as a narrative lapse (...) A gap appears where an event might have been” (2001, 242). However, the lack of narrative on the journey does not, in my mind, signify an absence of an event. In the case of the ex-Rhodesian gap, the unnarratability of the event makes it all the more profound and deeply meaningful.

Often, when the ex-Rhodesians shared their emigration experiences with others, it was sufficient to minimize the experience into a snapshot. I was present in a conversation where Stuart and Ken met for the first time. They had been conversationally mapping each other out over drinks for some time, establishing each other’s place of belonging – arguing about the superiority of either Salisbury or Bulawayo,²⁶ humming tunes of army songs, and eventually, as if to wrap up the discussion, reminiscing about their emigration experiences. Stuart and Ken did not talk about the leaving home, nor did they discuss the departure journey. They very briefly stated where and how they had lived in the gap: “Do you know that for the first two weeks in South Africa I lived on a balcony of a friend’s flat in Hillbrow?” Ken said. “Well, I lived at Jan Richter for four months!” Stuart boasted. And then they both laughed amicably.

What does this stating of placenames in the gap, *Hillbrow* and *Jan Richter*, signify in this context? Why was the mentioning of these names sufficient in creating an apparent mutual appreciation? Hillbrow used to be a white suburb in central Johannesburg. In today’s South Africa it has a bad reputation.²⁷ Jan Richter, on the other hand, is a rather unattractive block of flats in Pietermaritzburg. It was originally built for student accommodation and later on it became a boarding house. Today it offers accommodation for the elderly.²⁸ Stuart and Ken knew – without having

²⁶ The tug-of-war between Salisbury and Bulawayo was a never-ending – albeit joking – topic of conversation. The Bulawayo people referred to Salisbury as *Bambazonke*, a derogatory term derived from Sindebele, meaning, “Grab all.” The Rhodesian government was seen to focus its energy on the development of Salisbury, the capital, whereas Bulawayo was left to stand on its own. (See for example Encyclopaedia Rhodesia 1973; Godwin and Hancock 1999, 21.) It needs to be noted here that the friction between the two towns, which still exists, is also significantly a matter of hostility between the Shona and the Ndebele. (See for example Werbner 1991; Alexander, McGregor and Ranger 2000.) In the aftermath of the 2000 elections, Terence Ranger noted that it must have been the first time in history that Harare and Bulawayo agreed on anything: they both voted for the opposition party MDC. (Personal communication, July 2000.)

²⁷ On one church web page, Hillbrow is defined as the “drug and prostitute monster of South Africa” (<http://theosis.org/stmagdalene/hillbrow.html>).

²⁸ The rooms at Jan Richter are very small. In his interview, Stuart elaborated on the room he had: “I actually lived there in a room that you couldn’t have got that couch into it. [He points at a sofa that sits three people.] There was a bed and on that side was a basin and at the end of the room there was a shower. And there

to spell it out – the significance of highlighting the very basic, even rough, living conditions they had had to put up with. Living on somebody's balcony makes you truly homeless: you have left behind your home, your family and your belongings. The names of the places carry these shared experiences of displacement in the gap. When they spoke of the balcony or the boarding house, they implicitly spoke of home and a way of life left behind. And in so doing they expressed a sense of unity and belonging in the community of ex-Rhodesian.

In Kevin's emigration narrative, the car, the trailer, the tent and the *braai* could be seen as the equipment of a nomad, a nomad who is at home while on the move. But was Kevin at home on the move? The way he has arranged his little camp in the bleak and solitary rest place on the road in Mpumalanga (then Eastern Transvaal) signifies an attempt to hold and control the space he momentarily occupies. The warm and tender way Kevin speaks about his car and his trailer – "It's like a new car, I did it up, and I put a matching little trailer on the back" – expresses obvious care and concern towards his possessions. But this space, the gap, is by definition an in-between space, which can be held in place and made conceivable by taking care – the best one can – of those things one is in control of.

The balconies, the boarding houses, the caravan parks and tents may be considered as places in the gap. But people are not necessarily at home wherever they lay their tent. Although attempts are made to domesticate these places that dot the gap, they cannot be seen as homes. They are by definition in-between and exist in a temporary space. As I have discussed in regard to walking and wandering around in the bush, there is movement, where people in a sense do not move. They are in the place while moving. This can be seen as a nomadic sense of place, by which places become meaningful in mobility. Such a sense of place is conspicuous in the ex-Rhodesians' experience of landscape, perhaps most saliently expressed in driving and trekking. However, gapping as a mode of movement does not fall into this category. In remembering the emigration, the gap is between experienced solids, and the means of creating continuities between the old lives and the new ones are yet to be formed. Thus, I do not agree with the idea that people are at home "in and through movement" (cf. Rapport and Dawson 1998, 32) *at all times*. In the gap neither the tent nor the caravan is a home, although they might be extensions of it while wandering in wilderness. In the ex-Rhodesian experience the gap is a moment and a space of particular indefiniteness and obscurity, of comprehensive in-betweenness. Camping in the gap encapsulates the ripping apart effect of the migratory experience. In a sense, the gap may be regarded as a state of liminality. Consider Victor Turner's eminent definition:

was a sort of little desk and a sort of shelf at the end of the bed. And that was where I lived for four months."

Liminal entities are neither here nor there; they are betwixt and between the positions assigned and arrayed by law, custom, convention and ceremonial (...) Liminal entities, such as neophytes in initiation or puberty rites, may be represented as possessing nothing (...) Among themselves, neophytes tend to develop an intense comradeship and egalitarianism. Secular distinctions of rank and status disappear or are homogenized. We are presented (...) with a "moment in and out of time," and in and out of secular social structure (1987, 95-96).

In most accounts, the gap is remembered from the position of "exile solidity" – however unfixed such solidity might be. In remembering the gap the ex-Rhodesians create an intense bond of comradeship and egalitarianism based on the shared experience of loss and in-betweenness. The out of the ordinary and unconventional living conditions – tents, balconies, boarding houses and caravan parks, (one couple even stayed in a kennel) – are accentuated in the stories. Likewise, the lack of possessions further intensifies the feeling of egalitarianism. The almost neophyte state, the sense of "being eighteen again" refers not only to the state of de-possession but also to the scarcity of proper adult knowledge of the new social landscape.

But the gap narrative is something else as well: it is another origin narrative. It is the beginning of a diaspora community. Analogous to the pioneering origin narratives, the rough conditions are played out loudly in the gapping stories. But the nothingness expressed in the exile origin story does not concern the physical environment, which in the pioneer narrative offered promise and opportunity and called for initiative. The nothingness here is nothingness as loss. The gap narrative captures this experience of a momentary void. If the gapping story is about being in-between, the packing of belongings is about arrival. It is about the arrival of "us" narrated through the arrival of objects. In Kevin's story, he repeatedly returned to the loss of possessions. His belongings, the camping gear excepting, never seemed to have traveled with him. In the following stories, which give prominence to belongings, the departure and the movement are about the travel of objects, *homethings*. Although the road seems silent, there is a lot of noise in the roof racks and trunks and trailers.

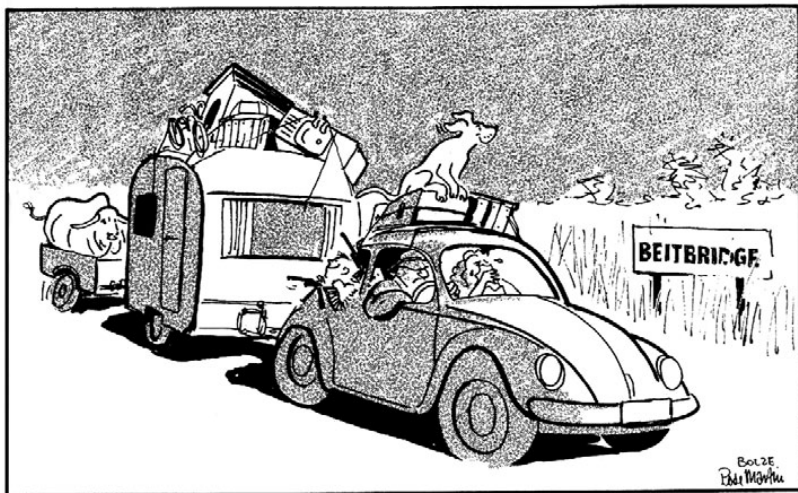
Bringing Homes on Their Backs

The pain comes in two parts; the first, the actual leaving with its emotional and physical upheaval, and the second, the trauma of settling in when you don't really want to (Bulley 1987, 10).

Packing belongings

By far, most of the departure stories I was told, were stories of the exchange controls and worries about getting caught at customs. A lot of the stories were precise lists of belongings the people had packed and ferried. In every

house I visited I felt as if I was also introduced to the furniture and told about its packing and removing. I was told how appalling the exchange controls had been, how difficult it was for them to sell their houses, how little they got for them (how much the houses would be worth now), how they had to sell their new cars and buy old ones, how the money they had to leave in Zimbabwe has shrunk to a pittance. "Why do they talk about their dining room suites all the time?" I wondered. It finally dawned on me that the incessant talk about packing and unpacking *things* might have to do with collective unpacking of a sense of home. It had to do with arrival.



Picture 3: Taking the gap

This cartoon by Louis Bolze and Rose Martin (1978) is illustrative of how the emigration story is generally told. A little old car is towing a heavily loaded caravan, which is pulling a bull-carrying trailer. The car is approaching the border town of Beitbridge. There is a nuclear family with a sulking father driving the car, wearing a bush hat and a khaki shirt. The mother beside him is crying. The kids on the back seat are playing with guns. The only enthusiastic member of the family seems to be the dog sitting on the top of the luggage on the roof of the old VW beetle. The family in the picture has obviously packed in everything they could manage, including the kitchen sink.

The above picture is being presented and represented perpetually in various ex-Rhodesian publications. As such it has become the emblem of the emigration experience. Seeing the picture awakens personal memories and evokes the whole narrative of the gap. Susan and I were once leafing through the cartoon book *Whenwes of Rhodesia*, where the picture is represented. Seeing the picture she burst out laughing: "This is exactly how we looked like when we came down here. We were driving in a convoy of three cars. I was driving one car and towing a trailer. My parents were

driving the second car and Graham the third one. We had two dogs, a cat and three birds.”“Plus two teenagers and all our stuff,” Pam added. It seems to me that a lot of the emigration narratives were written and recounted with this image in mind. For example:

Terry and I left Zimbabwe in October, 1980 and headed for Durban (...) We were quite a sight trundling along to Durban in our little mini with the roof-rack piled high. We got a lot of hoots and cheers from passing South Africans (Vice 1989, 5).

Kevin’s photograph of the gap also communicates with the above cartoon. The mutual experience of emigration and the shared memories of the event seem to be inscribed in the image. The image has the power to trigger those memories; it seems to insist on individual input to the imagery of emigration. It operates as a template onto which people can attach their experience. Yet, the picture also shapes and structures both the way the event is remembered and the way it is narrated.

At the time of emigration, the amount of cash and personal belongings that emigrants were allowed to take out of Zimbabwe was strictly restricted by regulations. During the 1970’s, the nationalist government of Ian Smith had already practiced strict exchange controls. Until 1975, a family could take Rh \$5000 (~US\$ 6000) out of the country. After that, the amount was lowered to Rh \$1000 per family or Rh \$500 per individual. If one had been abroad during the emigration year, the amount would be still lower, because they had already taken out foreign currency in the form of holiday allowance. After Zimbabwe’s independence in 1980, Mugabe’s government carried on with the regulations of Smith’s regime. The number of personal effects that could be taken out of the country was limited to clothing, one lounge suite and one dining room suite per family, one bed per person and a car, which was at least four years old (Eaton 1996, xi).

But these regulations were maneuvered with in various ways. An article in the *Illustrated Life Rhodesia* in August 1978, explores how emigrating Rhodesians attempted to move out their assets:

Sales of high quality furniture have increased in recent months because Rhodesians are converting the money they can’t take from the country into assets they can shift. With only the permissible \$ 1000 in their pockets, when they leave the country, most emigrating Rhodesians have a tough time setting up a new home elsewhere, so more and more of them are attempting to take their homes on their backs, or at least enough in the way of furniture to be able to feather their new nests.

According to James Sharkey, manager of a firm specializing in hand-carved furniture, who is interviewed in the article quoted above, there was a lot of loose money around in 1978, which people were putting into quality: hand-carved bedroom, dining-room and lounge suites. Whereas exchange

control regulations concerned purchase of jewelry, no record was kept of people buying large quantities of high-quality furniture (Illustrated Life Rhodesia 1978, 17-18). Godwin and Hancock note that some of the emigration plans were quite ingenious. "Wealthy couples were allegedly arranging divorces because they could take out more of their assets as individuals and because a wife could claim maintenance for herself and any children by drawing upon her former husband's frozen assets in Rhodesia" (*Rhodesia Herald* 9 Oct 1977, cit. Godwin and Hancock 1999, 208). By 1980's the regulations were tightened. To restrict money being taken out of the country in the form of expensive furniture, the furniture had to have been in one's personal possession for a number of years. The exact number of years, however, seems to have fluctuated from case to case and from one assessor to another.

In hushed tones, people whispered how they had either managed to take or considered taking money out of the country. In the social gatherings of ex-Rhodesians, smuggling stories, and stories of outwitting the assessors, who would come to check that regulations were followed when furniture was going to be removed, were told as amusing anecdotes of ingenuity and cunning. Everybody knew somebody who had spent a lot of money on jewelry, antiques, Persian carpets, leather jackets, ivory, and so on, hoping to be able to sell them abroad.²⁹ "Everybody became a stamp collector," Vincent remarked. "Every time a new stamp came out, I'd buy about a hundred first day covers, which I've still got, because nobody wants to buy them." During vacations in South Africa, "arrangements were made" to leave behind some of their annual holiday allowance. "It was all done sort of legally (...) but [the circumstances] made everybody dishonest in some way" (Vincent and Claudia).³⁰

Nico tells how he and his wife did not declare at the border that they were actually going to emigrate. Instead, they told the customs people that they were going on a holiday, which enabled them to take out currency in the form of holiday allowance and return to Zimbabwe afterwards. But things did not work all that smoothly:

²⁹ Someone, I was told, had brought out twenty racing horses. The vans, carrying the horses, all had a false floor, under which tons of ivory was hidden. Another one had a box full of diamonds sewn inside a mattress.

³⁰ Whereas most smuggling stories focused on the amusing or absurd elements of the emigration experience, Vincent and Claudia's stories always seemed to bear a sense of humiliation and renunciation. Vincent in particular had had a difficult time settling in South Africa. When they emigrated in 1983, they were both already in their late fifties. Vincent had had his own business in Zimbabwe and he found it extremely difficult to fit in the South African working environment. He strongly felt that his home is still in Zimbabwe and that he should be there "to build the country."

We had bought a Datsun ---, we had just got married, as you know. And when we got to the border, you had to leave a deposit; the deposit was the value of the vehicle. In the vehicle we had our duvet and whatever very private personal expensive stuff. We had them hidden under the duvet. And (...) we said we're going on a holiday to Botswana. (...) They said, ok, but you just have to leave a deposit. And they didn't come and search the car. Thank God. (...) We left the deposit, we went over, and then that was in June.

That Christmas we came home and questions were asked at the border, why this and why that. And I said: "Come on, we liked it, we stayed for a long holiday." So they gave my money back. And then coming out through, back again, at Plumtree, they wanted more deposit. (...) We got through the Zimbabwe side. But when we got to the Botswana side, they actually arrested us.

They searched the car and there were plants in the car. Flame lily, we wanted to grow these with us. And for that they arrested us. (...) And then at the end, about five, six hours later, I actually started to cry. Not because I was scared, it was, you know you're nervous, you can't do nothing. I said: "For God's sakes, why are you arresting us? Take the bloody plants! Take what you want, just leave my car and let me go. You can have anything in the car!" which of course we had more stuff. You see we didn't, we hadn't declared that we were emigrating, we were holidaying.

Then finally one guy came on duty, I think it was 4 o'clock in the afternoon, duty change over. And I said: "Look, sir, please, we're allowed to make one phone call. We need to phone somewhere. This chap hasn't allowed us to phone. I make a phone call to M. [Nico's uncle]" He says: "Do you mean M?" I said: "Yes." He said: "Ok, let these people go right now, what you've been holding them for." So it's who you knew. When I look at this, it was frightening; it was the most harrowing experience. That's the last time I went back to Zimbabwe. To my home country. I refuse to go back. Things change, maybe I'll go back but not as they are now. And we went and we came to South Africa. (Nico)

Of the prohibited items Nico had hidden under the duvet, he only mentions the flame lily plants. Not every emigrant, however, had the money or the interest to spend it on luxury items in an attempt to export them. Most people's standard of living was perhaps not so very high in the first place, and it dropped drastically at emigration. According to Angela Cheater, "Some individuals had as little as £50 cash on arrival in the UK, although others had managed to squirrel away additional external resources. Almost all were, by first-world standards, impoverished" (1999, fn. 30). My data

suggests that the attempts to outwit the assessors and to find loopholes in the emigration regulations were much tamer and more innocent than the newspaper articles seem to indicate. Besides, “bringing homes on their backs” has to do with something more than mere “shifting of assets”; furniture – in this case at least – is certainly more than something that can be turned into cash. Rather than luxuries, most people seemed to have bought and brought with them – in addition to the allowed pieces of furniture and personal things – ordinary, everyday homely items: canned food, boxes of Ajax, which still have not been used up, or toilet rolls.³¹

What do the toilet rolls *et cetera* in boxes tell us? Functionally reasoning, money that could not be taken out of the country had to be spent on something that could be exported without causing hassle with the assessors or at the border. Packing useful stuff would also seem to indicate clear-headedness and coolness in the midst of a very uncertain situation. Retrospectively, however, the tinned soups and the toilet rolls speak of something else. These are goods that have no personal meaning as such. These are also goods that the people knew could be purchased with certainty in South Africa as well. Rather then, these ordinary, everyday items can be considered as commodities or basic amenities meant for immediate survival for an undeterminable period. They are goods for the gap. In the ex-Rhodesian experience, the gap is both a moment and a space of particular indefiniteness and obscurity, of comprehensive in-betweenness. Packing such amenities suggests a preparation for being on the road for an indefinite period. This, in spite of the fact that most people knew exactly where they were going, and many even had a house waiting for them.

Thus, in the face of uncertainty, the packing of personally insignificant (insignificant in a sense that there is no intimate or sentimental bond between the owner and the object) everyday utilities, seems to indicate that people were attempting to gather together and to bring along the normality, the routine, and the everydayness of home. Remembering toilet rolls and the like twenty years later also piles upon their meaning. First of all, the everyday-stuff becomes an emblem of the shared experience of preparing for survival. And secondly, their significance comes to lie in their experienced factual insignificance as utilities. A lot of this stuff was never actually used. A lot of this stuff still lies intact and unpacked. People share versions of common experience of having cardboard boxes full of Ajax or canned soup, best before 1983, in their garages today, and they find it amusing. The boxes, however, are also concrete reminders of a turning point in their lives: of a moment of bewildering uncertainty of what the

³¹ “Anne packed *everything* she thought they might need, right down to cushioning fragile possessions in boxes with a year’s supply of Wish toilet rolls. While the “Wish” was used up within a year, there are still a few boxes lurking in the garage that haven’t been unpacked yet” (Duff, 1998a, 17).

future was to bring. Comparing stories of boxes is soothing in that it shows that other emigrants had been reasoning about the uncertainty of survival and the indeterminacy of the gap in the same, now seemingly unreasonable, way.

At one Rhodesian Association meeting I attended, the local branch had received a letter from their ex-Rhodesian friends, a couple, who had formerly been active branch members, and who had recently moved to England where they were finding it very difficult to settle. The wife wrote of an immense homesickness; she longed for her home, her garden, her friends, and her relatives, and for the "sun and space and uncontaminated Africa." In England this couple in their mid-fifties worked as caretakers (a housekeeper and a janitor) in a *nouveau-riche* family. "The family is not very friendly and the job is physically demanding," she wrote. The branch members, listening to the letter being read out loud, self-ironically reflected upon what it might feel like to work as servants, when they themselves had employed servants all their lives. The couple lived in a flat above the family garage. They found it very difficult to make a home in that space, where they had no room for their belongings. They had not opened their cardboard boxes.³² The reading of the letter opened up a lively discussion about emigrating and making homes and about stuff in unopened boxes. Everybody, after twenty odd years in South Africa, still seemed to have things in boxes. "What sort of things?" I asked. "Well, the dinner bell!" Claudia and Susan said laughing, and with one voice. Packing the dinner bell at the time of emigration had been self-evident. It belonged inseparably to the dining room set of a colonial household. And it belonged inseparably to the routine ways in which home-life was socially organized. While packing it, however, most people were conscious of the changing way of life ahead of them: they were not going to have full-time servants to ring the bell any longer. As such, the bell in so many cardboard boxes may be seen as a symbol of a home that was, as well as a symbol of an end of an era.

Unpacking home

In the story below Vincent and Claudia tell about the confusion of breaking up a home, about the removal of belongings, and the hurt and disappointment, when non-Rhodesians could not understand what such an experience entails.

Claudia:

There were regulations and you couldn't bring a dining room suite. The only thing we could have had a problem with was that we had a new fridge. You had to have an assessor to come

³² The couple lasted in England for about a year. They have now moved back to South Africa.

and check your house before the removal company could take the things. And when we bought this fridge the man who sold it to us, said: "Don't worry, the assessor is a brother-in-law." There was no problem with that.

But even so, you see the list of things that we brought, they didn't list a dining room suite, it was just one chair, one chair, one chair. There were about three pages of them: one chair. And for some strange reason, we got two sideboards; one was listed as a cocktail carriage, just in case somebody changed the rules when you have things on the road, which could have happened because this could always happen.

Vincent:

It took about two or three weeks for all the furniture to arrive here. We had a new car, which we couldn't take out. So I sold that and I bought an old panel van because I thought, I didn't know what it was like to get accommodation here. It might be short. That there would be somewhere where we could park. You know, somebody's garden and sleep in the back of this thing. And we brought some folding chairs and some mattresses. But my daughter managed to find a house that we could rent. So we moved straight into this house and put these things out and we got a primus stove, a gas stove, and a kettle and an iron and a toaster and that's it. We hired a fridge for about four weeks. Surprising how little we could live on if we had to.

So then my boss came around after two or three days to see how we'd settled in and I think he was a bit shocked to find us sleeping on the floor and sitting on wooden boxes. And he sort of said: "Oh, why didn't you tell us?" Agh, I don't think the local people realized, they couldn't understand anyway, so what was the use of telling them. When I'd been here a month we went for a couple of beers [with a colleague] and I was telling him all about these feelings of having to move from Bulawayo to Pietermaritzburg and all this, and how we could only take one chair and one bed and all this nonsense. So he was just sitting quietly for a long time. Then when I finished he said: "I know exactly how you feel. It was the same when we moved to Maritzburg from Durban."³³ So I realized that what I'd been saying didn't mean a thing to him.

³³ The distance between Durban and Pietermaritzburg (or Maritzburg as the locals call it) is 79 km. People regularly commute the N3 toll road between the towns from home to office.

In the first paragraph Claudia neatly sums up the experience of many: there were regulations, but there were also some ways around the regulations. There was no problem with the refrigerator, an electric appliance, which according to the emigration regulations in effect at the time was too new, because "the assessor was a brother-in-law" of the man who had sold it. Similarly, a phone call to an influential uncle had saved Nico at the police station in Botswana. "It's who you know," he said.

The new refrigerator, however, seemed a poor consolation, when the impassioned issue is the breaking up of the wholeness of home. There is still frustration, indignation, even anger, in Claudia's otherwise gentle and kindly manner when she says: "it was just one chair, one chair, one chair... about three pages of them, one chair." What is she saying with the listing? In the case of Kevin's home, the past (and proper) home was depicted as one whole. Through Kevin's memories of home I have tried to show how the beautiful (simultaneously and inseparably aesthetic and moral) is embedded in and expressed through homethings. These homethings are organized and arranged in units, or sets, such as dining room suites. Parts of the units, like individual chairs, make sense only as components of a larger entity. Put together these sets, composed of separate items, build up a proper home. Disconnected from the whole, a random chair makes no sense. Communicating the experience of leaving home to outsiders, who have not experienced the same, who cannot "read" the significance of bells in boxes or the listing of chairs, is difficult, if not impossible. Leaving home was an experience that could not easily be shared with outsiders. The ex-Rhodesians felt that the South Africans continuously misinterpreted them. Vincent was trying to convey to his colleague his sense of disconnectedness and his emotions about leaving and losing home, by saying: "how we could only take one chair and one bed." He was trying to get recognition, perhaps some empathy and possibly sharing. But the colleague could not interpret properly what he was saying. He could not read Vincent's "one chair" as part of and as representative of larger units and continuities, which were now broken. He could not understand that through the idiom of listing pieces of furniture, Vincent was trying to convey a sense of loss of deeper connectedness and belonging. Vincent's random chairs "didn't mean a thing to him."

The emotions connected to leaving home are more often than not beyond verbal expression. People plan to bring along with them as much of home as a whole as they can. When those units, which composed the home, are broken into smaller particles, it is found absurd, ridiculous and hurtful. Disconnecting things that belong together confuses and breaks up the order of everydayness and the meaning of things. By destroying the cultural order expressed through arrangement of material objects, the whole idea of home is ridiculed. When people speak of departure through lists of random pieces of furniture, they use a culturally shared idiom of

talking about that for which there are no sufficient words: the hurt and confusion of breaking up and leaving a home.³⁴

Marjorie too talks about disconnecting and reconnecting sets of furniture. She tells about playing with the idea of suites to fool the assessors. In Marjorie and her husband Stuart's case the regulations seem to have been particularly strict. They were not allowed to take out dining room or lounge furniture, nor any electrical appliances. Marjorie, however, tells about how they did manage to squirrel away some restricted furniture:

I was going to dinner with someone and they had clearance, their furniture vans coming next morning to their house. And I said to her: "Will you take our lounge suite? I'm not leaving it behind." You know, the three-seater and two-seater. They were very new, we'd just bought them.³⁵ She said: "You get it to me before they arrive, so they don't know it's not mine." And she said: "I'll take it." She came early in the morning with a truck and that was how these [points to the two couches] got here. It's called the Zeederberg because of the wheel and the Zeederberg was the company that made the stagecoaches long ago.³⁶

And then when they came, the removal people came, they had to make a list of every single thing that went in. And we had to make the list, and they would say: "No you can't take that." I had so many chairs, odd chairs in my bedroom, which were not odd, and tables, these little tables and all these chairs, comfortable chairs, either on the veranda, and I said they were veranda chairs or in the bedroom.

The classic thing was that dining room table [points to it] 'cause you couldn't take that. 'Cause they allowed no dining room stuff. No dining room, no lounge. It was literally bedroom. But you

³⁴ And the packing up of homes continues to the present. The cost of living in South Africa has gone up substantially. One man writing in the local Rhodesian Association paper says he and his wife have to move after twenty years in South Africa, because they cannot afford to live there anymore. He writes: "Now we come to the present and we are packing up for our new move to the Isle of Wight. We cannot really take anything in the way of furniture and the little that we are taking is costing us the princely sum of almost R10 000. We are having to part with items that we have taken all over Africa (...) The trauma of deciding what to throw away, of what up to that moment had been of great sentimental value, is not worth reliving – it is very distressing" (*Shamwari*, February 2003).

³⁵ Her husband Stuart interrupts here and says: "We had them actually made, 'cause we went to the factory and we saw the log of wood that they cut up to actually make this one. [The wood is called] *mukwa*."

³⁶ The lounge suite model, with decorative wagon wheels on the sides below the armrests, was called Zeederberg, as a commemoration and a material reminder of the famous wagon transport service in the pioneering days.

could take kitchen tables. Now, this is Stuart's mother's. And before we left, we had that re-done, and it was re-surfaced and polished. And I said: "All right, we've gotta take this. What can I do with it?" And I phoned the people who had re-varnished it and I said: "If I stick contact plastic on that table, will it ruin? When I pull it off, will it take all that varnish?" And they said: "No, put Vaseline on the back of it but let it stick on the side and underneath." And then he said: "But why are you asking?" And I said: "I'm not prepared to tell you on the phone." I was that nervous. And that's what we did. So that it looked like a kitchen table (...) And the furniture removal people used it in the kitchen all day and it was the last thing they put in as the kitchen table. Well, we got it here and we peeled it off. (Marjorie)



Picture 4: Marjorie's lounge

Sitting in the lounge, surrounded by their familiar, comfortable Rhodesian furniture, Marjorie and her husband Stuart – and their dogs – appeared very settled; very much at home. Marjorie is sitting on a two-seater couch, part of the Zeederberg lounge suite, which she sneaked out of the country with the help of a friend. The heroic dining room table once masked as a kitchen table is behind her. Beyond the picture, the lounge is furnished with old armchairs decorated with rose print cushions, which face an un-used fireplace. Across the fireplace the wall is decorated with framed re-prints

of Baines' Victoria Falls,³⁷ which Marjorie had been given as a farewell gift. Above the bookshelf behind Marjorie is a display of silver spoons, each picturing a Rhodesian scene on its handle. Behind the window is a porch with a little bar, the walls of which Stuart has decorated with impressive collections of Rhodesian knives, beer mugs, stamps, copper plaques, maps and the like.

Gradually then, through time, the odd chairs become less odd. They become parts of new wholes, yet retaining in them the memory of being parts of past sets. One more example will help to show how the ex-Rhodesians "brought homes"; how unwrapping and placing old things in new places braids a rope that connects, maintains, and makes a sense of home. When I talked with Charles in the family lounge of their house, he verbally unwrapped the belongings in the room. We sat next to French doors leading to the garden. Outside, guinea fowls – generally thought by the ex-Rhodesians to be something very Rhodesian – were greeting us, pecking on the glass of the doors. Charles had hatched them in his breast pocket a few years before. On one wall was a framed certificate of Charles' full membership in the Rhodesia Pioneers and Early Settlers Society.³⁸ Another wall portrayed Charles' oil-painted Rhodesian landscapes: granite boulders balancing one on top of another, antelopes grazing on grassy plain, the Victoria Falls. There were also large hand-colored and sepia photographs taken by Charles' father and grandfather, who had pioneered in game photography in Rhodesia. On the third wall were portraits: grandfather as a small boy in England, an early Scottish ancestor in a knight's armor, father in an army uniform, and smaller portraits of the women of the family. Charles pointed to the furniture in the room:

We brought the furniture, everything you see in this room pretty well. What you're sitting on, that chair and this one (...) But this [armchair], this was actually a gift to my mother's father, when he retired from the mine in Messina, it's one of a set. And it's got more sentimental value than usefulness. But these we brought with us. That chair I've had since, I don't know when. I bought it. I'm more attached to the chair sentimentally. And

³⁷ Thomas Baines was the most significant landscape painter in 19th century Rhodesia. Terence Ranger notes that Baines is extremely significant, since his paintings have been reproduced in such numbers that his landscape has come to shape our imagination of what Rhodesia then was (1997, 61; 1999b, 12; Stiebel 2000).

³⁸ The certificate pictures a scroll of paper at the center, where the member's direct descent is certified. The certificate is emblazoned with the coat of arms of the Society, with a motto that reads *sequor meliora*, (I follow better things). On the top of this paper scroll is a half-length portrait of Cecil John Rhodes, with the Victoria Falls behind him. On the sides are pictures of a Cape-Dutch style house, two elephants, a lion and a giraffe, Rhodes' grave on the Matopos, and the Great Zimbabwe ruins. At the bottom of the certificate are pictures of two treks: a wagon pulled by oxen and a carriage pulled by horses.

the hi-fi doesn't work, we brought that from Rhodesia. And the pictures. So we, we're comfortable, we brought home and Rhodesians do this. They surround themselves with the things, which are familiar.

The ex-Rhodesians thus "brought home" in the things that traveled with them. Surrounding themselves with familiar, cherished things they feel *at home*. Although Charles and Anne had Rhodesian furniture and objects around their house, this particular little room, where Charles and I had seated ourselves, was the memory room, the room where Charles was most "at home." Things – ordinary, everyday things like tables – however, gather new meanings when they travel. The significance of Marjorie's dining-room table rests on the motivations it is given in discourses of home and emigration: its ordinariness, its history of mobility, and the fact that it has its own emigration story. The table is authentically Rhodesian, in addition to which it used to belong to Stuart's mother. Thereby it interlaces the lost home and the present place of dwelling, in addition to which it concretizes the continuity of family in spite of mobility. The dining-room table can therefore be seen as bearing a metonymic connection to the *proper place*, to the lost home and homeland. It is a part of a whole in a past place. Furthermore, its symbolic meaning is also grounded in the fact that it is something that traveled with the people. People may have made somewhat haphazard choices about what to take with them and what to leave behind when they left home. However, once an object has managed to travel and arrive safely, it becomes something that carries its own life-history interlacing it with that of the owner.

As something that has survived, the traveling objects also speak of that which was lost and demolished. According to Anna Bohlin, who analyzes the display of objects at the District Six museum in South Africa, such objects – objects that have survived – evoke "the full social and cultural setting of which they used to be part. In this way, the objects can be regarded as material aspects of a 'myth,' evoking the narrative of District Six" (Bohlin 1998, 175-176). Although the Rhodesian homes were rarely demolished, they were given up and left behind. In packing, wrapping and ferrying the belongings, the homes were wrapped and enclosed conclusively. In this sense, the surviving items can be likened to the objects Bohlin is referring to, objects that have the power to call forth the whole setting of a home, part of which they once were.

It is evident that in the ex-Rhodesian case personal and social memory is embedded in ordinary objects. Daniel Miller (1998) argues that both commodities and gifts have the capacity to construct cultural projects wherein there is no simple dichotomy between things and persons. In my mind, this merging of things and persons happens in the ex-Rhodesian case through the emigration one has shared with one's belongings. Certain objects, which need not be heirlooms or objects of any financial value,

become valuable because of their departure, travel and arrival; and in the fact that they carry with them a relation to the homeplace. In their materiality – in the fact that they can be seen and touched, or sat on, or polished – they act as physical reminders of places of which they once were part. It can therefore be argued that the homeness of a home lies in the memories and narratives that are evoked through touching, seeing, arranging and displaying these objects. The world of homethings creates a certain permanence and stability of home. In their presence in new habitats the homethings connect places of dwelling through which they have traveled, thereby communicating a sense of home.

“We’ve All Got the Same Things”

Many ex-Rhodesians claimed that they could always tell a Rhodesian home. “You can recognize a Rhodesian house the minute you go into it. We’ve all got the same things,” Claudia said. With these *same things* Claudia referred to objects and goods such as *Willsgrove* tableware,³⁹ Rhodesian books,⁴⁰ things made of copper, such as trays or clocks cut out in the geographical shape of Rhodesia, re-prints or aquarelles of Rhodesian landscapes, flowers and trees, regimental plaques, souvenir display shields, stone sculptures, baskets, fabrics, Rhodesian coins, maps, flags and so forth.⁴¹

³⁹ Willsgrove Tableware was established in Bulawayo in 1965 and is still the largest producer of ceramic tableware in Zimbabwe. The company’s commitment is “to provide a top quality durable earthenware product of good value” (<http://www.zimtrade.co.zw/willsgrove/>) and truly, the pieces never seemed to break, “even if you wanted to,” Claudia added.

⁴⁰ Largely books belonging to Rhodesiana Reprint Library, a series established in Bulawayo in the late 1960’s to make available out-of-print Rhodesiana, through re-publication.

⁴¹ It is necessary to point out that there are other ways to make a home look Rhodesian than through this standardized repertoire or *Rhodesiana*, which I focus upon here. Alan and June’s home on the Cape peninsula was an example of another kind of home, which was definitely Rhodesian but largely through a different code to what I encountered elsewhere in South Africa. Alan had worked in the Native Administration in Rhodesia and there was a long colonial history in both of their families. Theirs to me was a *colonial* home; the walls were decorated with paraphernalia that could easily be associated with colonial administration. There were guns and spears hung on the wall. On one wall a series of chief’s badges were hung in chronological order: the uppermost was a chief’s badge dating from the BSAC days, below one from the days of the Federation, then one from the UDI-Rhodesia period, and finally a Zimbabwean badge. Above the badges was a thick leather belt, which had belonged to a chief’s messenger, referred to as “a runner.” Other small decorative items hinted at a wider colonial family history. A small bronze Buddha sat on a hardwood chest of drawers with two see no evil – hear no evil – speak no evil – statues, one of ivory, the other of marble. A big wooden chest and the many Persian carpets were inherited, as were the old paintings on the living-room walls, the oldest dating from the

background. The one on the left is a souvenir coin frame, which portrays a three-dimensional cut-out map of Rhodesia, backed with green baize. The green baize is mounted with a collection of seven Rhodesian coins. The picture in the middle, positioned standing on one corner, is a three-dimensional copper carving with the map in the middle and a mounted Rhodesian coat of arms above the map.⁴² The one on the right is similar to the first one, only this is a souvenir stamp frame. Below the copper maps is a pennant of the local South African Moth-association branch with the Rhodesian flag⁴³ on its side. Moving on to the upper right corner of the picture, one sees three souvenir regimental display shields, below which is a collection of knives and axes. The jackknives, pocketknives, sheath-knives, daggers and axes are the unique and most personal elements of this altar, which emphatically stand out from the otherwise very standard representation of a collection of nationalist symbols. Stuart had collected the weapons during the war years. Three or four of them he had made himself. Two of the knives were “booties from the *terrs*.”⁴⁴ They all carried stories related to how and where and under what circumstances they were obtained – stories I was not told.

The second picture shows Felix’s version of a Rhodesian altar. Here the two home countries are represented side by side. There is the green-and-white Rhodesian flag with the pre-1994 South African flag on its side. Below the green-and-white are two smaller flags. The one with the Union Jack on dark blue is the flag of the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland, which was in use from 1953 to 1963. Beside it is a light blue flag of Rhodesia, used from 1963 to 1968. Underneath are two enlarged photographs: one portrays the Victoria Falls and the other the Table Mountain in Cape Town, both of them iconic postcard-picture “national landscapes.” At the bottom are two copper-carved engravings. The first one is identical to the one represented in Stuart’s collection: a map of Rhodesia with the coat of arms in the middle. The other copper piece has the green-and-white flag on top and the words of the national anthem⁴⁵ written below. There is

⁴² The coat of arms was granted by Royal Warrant in 1924. The gold pick on the Armorial Bearings represents mining, the green background represents agriculture. The lion passant between two thistles is derived from the coat of arms of Cecil Rhodes. The supporters are sable antelopes. On the top is a representation of the Great Zimbabwe Bird. The motto of the coat of arms is *Sit Nomine Digna*, translated as “May she be worthy of the name” (Encyclopaedia Rhodesia 1973, 26-27).

⁴³ The green and white flag of UDI Rhodesia (in use between November 11, 1968 – September 2, 1979).

⁴⁴ Most white Rhodesian war veterans referred to the ZIPRA and ZANLA guerrillas as terrorists – “terrs.”

⁴⁵ The national anthem was introduced in 1975, just a few years before Zimbabwe’s independence. For the music, the government chose Beethoven’s “Ode to Joy.” A competition was then launched to find suitable lyrics. The



Picture 6: Felix's altar of two home countries

also a picture of the coat of arms of RASA – the Rhodesia Association of South Africa. On the top of that is a small sticker – with a flame lily motif – to celebrate the “Centenary of Rhodesia 1890-1990.”⁴⁶

Quite a significant proportion of items selected for these altars – and for other similar ones – is memorabilia, sometimes produced, but even more often obtained, *post*-Rhodesia. These kinds of objects are made with the very objective that they might help us to remember. Such objects, Alan Radley (1990, 48) remarks “are marked out intentionally as things which will help their makers – or those that come after them – to remember an event, activity or principle.” In the ex-Rhodesian altar, these may be “ethnic” items – such as soapstone figurines, sculptures and fabrics – purchased on re-visits to Zimbabwe after emigration. Or they may be gifts – often books and paintings – from the person’s South Africanized children. Some of the items – particularly ones with national emblems, such as the national flower, the flag, or the coat of arms – can be grouped as *commodified nostalgia*: they are bought through Rhodesian Associations or from various Rhodesian memorabilia e-stores specializing in *Rhodesiana*. These are often memorabilia and collectibles made as such. David Saffery, who deals in African memorabilia from his shop in London (and through a web-shop⁴⁷), tells that his most sought after and desirable collectibles at the moment are not African carvings or masks, but *Rhodesiana* such as flags, badges and old

competition was won by Mrs. Mary Bloom, and the anthem “Rise O Voices of Rhodesia” was born (Godwin and Hancock 1999, 145-146).

⁴⁶ The “Centenary” was celebrated in ex-Rhodesian communities throughout the world in 1990. This celebration will be discussed in Part IV.

⁴⁷ <http://www.afribilia.com>

bank notes. "Almost all the people who buy from me have some connection with Rhodesia; most of them still describe themselves as Rhodesians, although they might live in London, Connecticut or Sweden," Saffery says (Out of Africa International 2002, 13). In addition to decorative items and collectibles, custom embroidered clothing forms a big part of the selection in the Rhodesian e-stores. Sometimes the t-shirts, jerseys, golf-shirts, caps and hats have just the flame lily or the national flag as a logo, sometimes they also have a slogan, such as "Rhodesia was super," or "Rhodesians never die, they just inhabit the world."⁴⁸

Significantly, despite individual variation, the composition of the altars shows, to borrow from Johannes Fabian, "predictable creativity." Fabian (1996, 193-195) talks about predictable creativity in regard to the concept of *genre* in Shaba popular painting in Zaire. He shows that there are a limited number of topics that the paintings represent; the creativity within the genre is something that the community can share. The elements assembled together in altars are, to a large extent, shared among the community. With this I mean that they do not so much refer to the individual life-history – they are not collages of family pictures and family homes, for example – but are, most often, assemblages of obvious national symbols and national landscapes. They are also easily sharable in the way they are presented. Usually the altar is located in the lounge – either on the wall or on top of a shelf or a drawer – or on some other wall where it can be clearly and easily seen by visitors to the home.

Such sharable elements, repeatedly replicated in unique compositions, form a pattern, a mnemonic medium which circulates in the ex-Rhodesian society. Nancy Munn suggests that among the Kaluli, the memory world is a template, which is realized in verbal or visual genres suited to social circulation. The template is based on culturally informed and experienced structures that enable others to link their own experience to that described. At the same time, the template structures the biographical remembering of others (1995, 87; see also Armstrong 2004, 45-46). The memorabilia objects assembled in the altars refer to the collective narrative of an emigrant community. The altar is thus a visual, mnemonic tool that with ease communicates with others in the ex-Rhodesian community. The assembling of elements in the altars – thus, significantly, their presentation as a collection – seemed to have a quality that Fabian underlines as the most significant feature of the Zairian genre painting: "a quality capable of triggering memories" (1996, 195). Through such displays the ex-Rhodesians are able to make a homecoming of a sort, to connect themselves to where they belong, to be there, here.

If the gapped pieces of furniture can be considered metonymic, in a sense that they call forth the past wholes of which they once were part, the

⁴⁸ See for example: *Rhodesiawassuper. The Online Rhodie Store* (<http://www.lekkerwear.com>) and *Mazoe DotCom* (<http://www.mazoe.com>).

elements of Rhodesian altars, the memorabilia objects, condense a sense of belonging through a different means. It is significant that people do not consciously differentiate between these elements – the metonymic parts of past wholes and the souvenir memorabilia objects. Objects belonging to both categories may be used in articulating self-identity and belonging. Together they form that which may be called the *Rhodesianness* of the homes. In my understanding, however, these objects refer to different directions. The metonymic objects refer to a sharable past in the *past*, whereas the memorabilia objects refer to the sharable past in the *present*. The metonymic objects, ordinary everyday items – but items, which have taken the gap – refer both to the past lost home and to the continuity of a sense of home. The memorabilia objects, on the other hand, are objects, which do not hold a direct connection to past places. They do not require recontextualization, as it were. Yet, in spite of their very standardized imagery and presentation, they awaken deep memories connected to places.

Both the metonymic and the memorabilia artifacts hold within them memory, but with a distinctive difference. The metonymic objects are personal and mundane; they are parts of an old home reassembled in the new one. They have a capability to forge a connection and continuity in one's personal life-history. On the other hand, the memorabilia objects gathered together in collections refer to Rhodesia in a different way: in their "predictable creativity" they are essential in creating a sense of belonging to the diaspora community. These memorabilia artifacts are vital for making a home *look* Rhodesian. They are socially selected items – conscious, obvious objects indicating sameness – communally used to represent home-as-Rhodesian; they are items through which it is possible to remember together. They embody social memory and indicate belonging to an ex-Rhodesian community. In short, what is being *displayed* seems to refer to being in exile, whereas what is *used* refers to being at home.

Conclusion: The Almostness of Home

Close to the end of my fieldwork, I visited the ex-Rhodesian community of a small South African mining town. I stayed with Alison and Hal, who had lived in their fairly standard detached three-bedroom house for almost twenty years, practically all their married lives. Their children had been born and raised there. The couple's friends and family members lived in the vicinity. Alison and Hal were both very much involved in the social life of the local ex-Rhodesian community. In other words, there seemed to be nothing unsettled or ambiguous about their "being at home." And yet, when they were showing me around their house, they concluded the tour by saying: "This is *almost* like home."

Now, how are we to understand such a statement? Alison and Hal were pointing out to a layer of homeness, which they sensed was lacking

from the home they had lived in for most of their lives, a layer without which the home could not be whole. The layeredness and almostness of home that Alison and Hal were referring to can be further elaborated by distinguishing between home as a place where one stays and home that stays with oneself. Steve, who also worked in the mine in the same town, contemplates:

From the time I arrived here, I knew I wasn't gonna go anywhere else, you know what I mean. But to make it actually take the place of Bulawayo, and take the place of Rhodesia, I don't think it will ever do that. It will never. This is the longest I ever stayed in one house, you know what I mean; in this house we've got now, is the longest we ever stayed in. So it's our home. It's where we're gonna stay, we are not going to go anywhere else. But home in my heart is always Bulawayo. I always think back and I think of my friends and I think of my house where I stayed in the Queenspark. That is all in your memory (...) And it will never go away. And that's in my heart. That's where home is. (Steve)

Alison and Hal's and Steve's ideas of home imply that the lived-in home at best edges or borders on being the true home. In this migrant idea of being almost-at-home, the home – in part – is always somewhere else, even if the everyday practices and social relationships tie it closely with the locality. In my mind this longing for true home – a longing, which need not always be narrated with words but may be presented through visual representations such as the altars – is partly constitutive of the ex-Rhodesian sense of a “we.” To be part of and to belong in that community assumes this longing. It does not mean that people are constantly yearning for something they have lost. Nor are they at a permanent state of unease and restlessness. What it means is that there is a culturally shared sense of home as something that cannot be completely reconstructed and carried along wherever one decamps, despite the fact that it is, in part, “brought out.” In a critical commentary on Rapport and Dawson's (1998, 29-30) mobile notion of home, Paul Basu (2001, 335) argues:

In discussing narrative as a mobile resource [Rapport and Dawson] seem to discount the possibility that it may also be used to articulate senses of rootedness. Indeed, they may be correct in doubting the (objective) reality of lost edenic homes evoked in migrant tales (...) but surely they ignore the (subjective) reality of these putative homes for the people who invoke them.

Despite the recent academic eagerness to stress multiple and mobile attachments in modern Western identity, Basu (2004, 157) suggests an alternative reading to home, in which home remains a place where one belongs in some profound sense. For diaspora populations, Basu argues,

"[T]o be in a position to make a homecoming suggests that one is not in such a place already: that this home exists elsewhere, somewhere and/or sometime 'other' than the here and now" (ibid.). Basu also recognizes that homeplaces are undoubtedly partially formed in the imagination, but what is significant is that the places are very much empowered by their materiality: "[T]hey may be visited, they may be touched, pieces of them may be held in the hand, put in pockets, retained as keep-sakes" (ibid., see also Hecht 2001).

I have also proposed that the world of tangible homethings creates a certain permanence and stability of home. "Bringing home" is about surrounding oneself with such familiar, cherished objects, through which a sense of at-homeness may actualize. In their presence in new set-ups the homethings connect places of dwelling through which they have traveled, thereby constructing and maintaining a sense of home. A migrant home is a composite of memory-evoking items that point to different spatio-temporal directions. Through memories and narratives that are evoked through interacting with these objects, the homeness of a home is pieced together. However, home is always more than, and beyond, the sum of the bits that embody homeness, that make a home. That is why it refuses to be brought out completely. The remembering of past homes and the recounting of stories about brought-out belongings may be considered as the sharing of narratives that create a memory world, whose source, as Nancy Munn says, is an actual land with actual people (1995, 83). A statement "almost like home," I suggest, encompasses the individual experience of leaving and loss, but it is conjointly a product of, as well as an input to, a cultural script of home in the diaspora community. Such social transmitting of stories of home is constitutive of a sense of belonging in the community. In narratives of home, the narrating individual is tying an individual story to the chain of other home-stories. The meanings of the notion of home become construed contemporaneously with self-interpretation. Through such stories, the individual is speaking of oneself while at the same time linking oneself to a discourse, integrating oneself to continuity, adding to and altering that discourse simultaneously. It is through this process that an individual belongs.

PART IV COMMEMORATING COMMUNITY

Introduction

In this section, I focus on commemorative practices through which the ex-Rhodesian community remembers together and through which the community is socially produced. I do this by describing and analyzing two case examples, both of them social events organized by the Rhodesian Association of South Africa, the social life of which was a focal point in my fieldwork. The first example concerns food events organized by the branches of this organization. The most common form of a social food event in the community was a *bring and braai*, a barbeque where people bring along their own food (meat and side dishes and drinks). A *braai* is an abbreviation of the Afrikaans word *braaivleis*, which means roasted meat. It is also used as a verb: to *braai*, i.e., to roast meat. Thirdly *braai* is the name of the actual social event, as in “you are invited to a *braai*.” *Bring and braais* were arranged regularly, normally once a month, either in a park or in someone’s garden, or in some other easily accessible pleasant place out-in-the-open. I consider how food, and the particular ways of cooking and consuming, is something through which people remember past places, past communal attachments and past meals. In addition to food being an apt mnemonic trigger it is also connected to moral gestures. Through participating in shared meals, people express hospitality, sharing, kindness and caring. The act of eating together is an act of solidarity, integral to the making and maintaining of the contemporary diaspora community.

The second example concentrates on shared remembering in the context of a particular, unique event – the celebration of a “Centenary of Rhodesia,” in 1990. A centenary, I might add, that was celebrated ten years *after* Rhodesia ceased to exist in 1980, when Zimbabwe gained her independence. In South Africa, the festivities involved the creation of an imaginary *Rhodesianaland* in a holiday resort. The key event during the week of festivities was a re-enactment of the arrival of the Pioneer Column at Fort Salisbury (Harare) and the founding of Rhodesia in a flag raising ceremony. Through this example, I look at the fabrication of a temporary site of commemoration and consider the ways in which people remember together in a realm designed for social memory.

The main question of this section, then, has to do with how a community remembers together through shared social events. I regard the *bring and braai* and the celebration of the centenary as special spaces or realms of memory in this community. The moral gestures, the sharing of company, of food, and of memory pertaining to the *bring and braai* food event are all about creating a community of memory, about socially producing “the understanding of what life is like” and what is *should* be like. Whereas the *bring and braai* was a repeated locus for social remembering, the Centenary

celebration was a unique event, openly and concretely a culturally constructed memory site. Both of the events can be seen as composed of elements or parts that recall past wholes of which they once were part. But in diaspora, in a new place and in new social circumstances, there is always slippage in repetition of social forms. Both the *bring and braai* and the Centenary celebration in *Rhodesianaland* were particularly diasporic ways of getting together.

But before moving on to the description and analysis of these social events, it is necessary to briefly look at the history and organization, as well as the aims and practices of the Rhodesian association, which was responsible for organizing these commemorative events.

1. A DIASPORA ORGANIZATION

Rhodesians Worldwide

The white emigration and the spreading out of former Rhodesians to places both far and near led to quite instantaneous establishments of Rhodesian associations in localities where sufficient numbers of ex-Rhodesians had settled.¹ In their first years of existence, these associations were often informal networks, focusing on the alleviation of the newcomers' practical settling in their new home-to-be. A couple of years later, modes of worldwide communication were developed, first in the form of a quarterly published magazine *Rhodesians Worldwide*, which began to be published in Australia in 1985. Initially the magazine aimed mostly at providing contact information for ex-Rhodesians settling in their new places of dwelling.

Subsequently, the scope of the magazine has broadened. It still includes the very popular column *Bush Telegraph*, which reports on day-to-day lives and news of individual Rhodesians globally, in addition to which there is a separate contact column. There are life-historical serials; personal recollections of some historical happenings or of more general old ways of life; war stories; cuttings of newspaper articles on Zimbabwe's current situation; book reviews; round-ups of the world-wide associations; and classifieds, which include notices of births, deaths, engagements, marriages and anniversaries; as well as notices of wanting to buy or sell Rhodesiana items; and advertisements, for example, for accommodation offered by ex-Rhodesians, and for emigration assistance. According to the 2001 front page, the magazine now covers six continents. In addition to the published and well-circulating magazine, its electrical equivalent, a hugely popular

¹ At the moment, according to the Rhodesians Worldwide Web pages, there are Rhodesian associations operating in South Africa, Australia, New Zealand, USA, Canada and Britain. All of these associations have a number of branches. For example, in addition to the national organization, there are twelve Rhodesians Worldwide branches in the United Kingdom, nine in Australia and five in the United States. In addition to general Rhodesian associations, which operate mainly as venues for social gatherings, there are dozens of associations connected to some more particularly defined common interest. These associations are not necessarily place-bound but work largely as contact forums in the web. These associations may be organized around past regiments (e.g., BSA Police Regiment Association; Air Rhodesia Association); around past schools or community and church groups. (See *Rhodesians Worldwide: Employers, Schools, Tertiary Institutions, Community and Church Groups* <http://www.rhodesia.com/groups.htm>)

*Rhodesians Worldwide Web*² was launched in the mid-nineties, as were various other Rhodesian websites.³

RASA: The Rhodesian Association in South Africa⁴

History

The liberal press [In South Africa] had its own sensitivities about a group of people who had just fled a political dispensation similar to the one they wished to promote. It seized any negative behaviour by a Rhodesian which would reinforce the stereotype of Rhodesians as racist, beer-swilling “When-we’s.” This image horrified some Rhodesians into shunning all contact with their former compatriots to “make a clean break.” (Who hasn’t cringed at the label, “When-we”?) But many others recognised that they had a legitimate social need to connect with a past where they had enjoyed a sense of belonging and unity. They needed one another to empathise with in order to move forward, they needed people who “speak the same language” (Duff 1998a, 17).

Many of the first-wave emigrants from Rhodesia – those that left prior to Zimbabwe’s independence – were South African born and could resume their old citizenship. At that time South Africa was blooming economically, and Rhodesians could, according to Charles, “walk into jobs very easily.” A lot of people in that crowd landed up in the Orange Free State gold fields, especially in a small town called Welkom, which is where the first Rhodesian Association in South Africa was established in 1979. The intent of this club was to help find employment for the influx of Rhodesian immigrants (The Settler 1989, 9) and, according to Charles, “just to keep together (...) since the South Africans were not altogether happy to have Rhodesians in their midst.” In Charles’s view, it was not so much the Afrikaners, but the English-speaking South Africans, who were suspicious of Rhodesians:

There’s a difference of attitude between the English-speaking South Africans and the Rhodesian. The language was the common factor but there are a lot of differences. And especially

² *Rhodesians Worldwide* 2007. Contact Site for Folk from Rhodesia. <http://www.rhodesia.com/>

³ Tempting as it might be, the topic of a web-community will not be investigated in this work in any detail. It is a large and complicated and very much an emerging issue, inviting both theoretical and methodological pondering, and deserves a closer look than is possible here.

⁴ In 1994 the name of the national organization RASA was changed into Flame Lily Foundation (FLF). The branches of the organization could, however, retain the old title if they so wished (Duff 1998b, 16). The people I worked with spoke of FLF and RASA interchangeably, perhaps, however, preferring to use the old name.

in Natal where the Rhodesians went, and again, I don't have this just from the Rhodesian viewpoint, but South Africans have told me. When a Rhodesian got a job here, they were determined – because they didn't have money to start – to make that job work for them. Whether Rhodesians are harder-working or more industrious, I don't know, but when they came here, a lot of them worked harder than the South Africans. So Rhodesians tended to show up their South African colleagues by virtue of working harder, longer hours, more diligently, sometimes producing a better product, and this created a bit of friction. So, some of the South Africans saw Rhodesians as a threat (...) The South African and the Afrikaners are very happy to welcome you, and they'll give you a cup of tea, but they don't want you to join their fraternity. They've got their own culture, their own friendship circles, and Rhodesians were intruders. So the Rhodesians automatically therefore, looked for each other. And in looking for each other, it was usually to find: How can I get a job? Where can I live? How can I spend my weekends with people who speak the same language, not only grammar, but the understanding of what life is like?

Thus, it was under these circumstances – in needing practical assistance and friendship – that the clubs and associations emerged. The first association, the Welkom Rhodesian Club, had outside support as well. A 90-year-old Irishman, Mr. Mackey, described as a gentleman and an eccentric, had a great sympathy for Rhodesians.⁵ In 1981, he decided to give his 217 ha farm property for the Rhodesian Club of Welkom in order for them to establish a museum depicting the history of Rhodesia from the pioneering days to the present (The Settler 1989, 9). Subsequently, the Welkom Club and the newly established Rhodesian Association of Bloemfontein decided to approach the numerous other Rhodesian associations, which had sprung up throughout the country, with the aim of building a national association. In May 1981, the Rhodesian clubs and regimental associations got together and decided to start working towards building the museum and a home for the aged on Mackey's farm. However, the project failed when Mackey died in late 1981 and his heirs made a legal claim to the farm, and the property was never transferred to RASA (ibid.; Redfern 1999, 1). In spite of the setback, this gradually launched the beginning of the national association. Formally established in 1984, RASA acts as an umbrella body for Rhodesian associations in South Africa (Redfern 1999, 1).

Currently in South Africa, the Flame Lily Foundation (FLF), which now incorporates RASA, is the only nation-wide general Rhodesian association. In addition, there are various Rhodesian regimental, church

⁵ According to Charles, the fact that Mackey was of Irish background also made him anti-British and, therefore, pro-Rhodesian.

and school organizations, and smaller local associations, such as the Cape Rhodes Society and the Flame Lily Lunch Club. The last two operate in and around the Cape. During my fieldwork, I focused on the Flame Lily Foundation, which currently has five local branches and a total of some 2000 paid-up members. I visited four of the branches and took part in their many functions. The Flame Lily Foundation, registered with the Department of Social Welfare, defines itself as a “charitable⁶ and cultural organisation, run for Rhodesians and by Rhodesians” (The Flame Lily Foundation, no date). Its stated aim is to “promote and further the interest of former residents of Rhodesia/Zimbabwe now living in South Africa” (Rhodesians Worldwide. Contacts in South Africa. http://www.rhodesia.com/sa_indx.html).⁷

As the Foundation’s motto “Keeping the flame alive” suggests, the preservation of history and heritage of Rhodesians can be seen as the *raison d’être* of the organization (Rhodesians Worldwide 1985, 7). Significantly, then, the motto speaks of the shared effort to keep remembering together. The chief function of the local branches, however, is to offer opportunities for social contact, to help ex-Rhodesians to keep in touch. In 1995 RASA carried out a membership survey (Flame Lily Foundation/RASA Survey 1995) to find out, among other things, how the members felt that the association was functioning, how they felt they benefited from it and what kinds of things could be improved. I have categorized the open answers to the question “What gives you the most satisfaction from being a member of the FLF/RASA?” into five clusters:

⁶ The principal welfare object is to provide affordable accommodation for the elderly ex-Rhodesians presently residing in South Africa. The foundation has two old-age homes with independent flatlets.

⁷ According to Charles, the aim of the organization was not so much that Rhodesians were to keep themselves as Rhodesians but the intent was to help the Rhodesians to integrate and to become South Africans without losing their Rhodesian memories and values. Many others opposed the idea that becoming South Africans, rather than explicitly retaining their Rhodesianness, would be the ultimate aim of the organization.

Table 2: Reasons Given for RASA Membership⁸

	STATED REASON FOR BEING MEMBER	%	N.
1	Contact with Rhodesians, belonging	63,2	91
2	Welfare, help	10,4	15
3	Special Events, activities	2,8	4
4	Information, news	30,6	44
5	"The cause" (nation, history, remembering, continuity of spirit)	9,0	13

According to this survey, the social contact, expressed by cluster one, seems by far to be the chief reason for being a member; more than sixty per cent of the open answers included a mention of its significance. The connection is not only maintained by meeting with people but also by reading about them and keeping up with what is happening in Zimbabwe today. According to the survey, the association was considered a necessary provider of such information and news, with a third of the answers mentioning this aspect. The major significance of the association as a provider of an arena for contact and for belonging is expressed with recurring phrases, such as: "Meeting others with the same background," "getting together with my own kind," "keeping in touch," "being part of something Rhodesian," "being part of the tribe," "sense of belonging," "a pride in belonging," "feeling of belonging to Rhodesian roots."

Membership

According to a 1995 survey on Rhodesians in diaspora conducted by Bill Eaton (1996; see also *Pretoria Branch Newsletter* 1995, 2-3), the RASA members fall into age groups in the following way:

27 %	71-99 years
33 %	61-70 years
20 %	51-60 years
16 %	41-50 years
4 %	under 40 years

⁸ Since one individual answer could include elements that fit into different clusters, the percentages presented refer to the number of responses to each category in relation to the total number of responses. For example, the answer number 68 – *Knowing we're keeping the flame alive. Attending to socials to meet friends and make new ones. Knowing old Rhodes are being cared for* – is divided into three categories. The first "motto" fits into cluster 5 "Cause." The second part into the cluster one and the third part into cluster two.

According to the most recent survey (Flame Lily Foundation 2003), the aging of the membership has continued:

76 %	over 60 years
19 %	50-60 years
5 %	under 50 years

The age structure of the members – seen as a critical issue – is a constant topic of concern in the editorials of the association's papers and newsletters, and it is discussed persistently at various meetings. For example, the analysis of the 2002 survey states:

With three-quarters of the membership being over the age of 60, the organization may be viewed as a pensioners' society, unlikely to attract younger members to gatherings. Furthermore, with 15 % living on the breadline, the organisation carries a large number of Privileged Members (those unable to meet the membership subscription) (Flame Lily Foundation 2003, 2).

Many feel it is very likely that as the older generation passes away a lot of the South African branches will wither. The association finds it difficult to attract younger members, many of whom are seen as having become "more South Africans than Rhodesians." The older generation, it needs to be said, has by many indicators also become quite firmly fixed in South Africa. According to the above mentioned survey, approximately two-thirds of the respondents are South African citizens, which means that almost all the Rhodesian-born members have become South Africans. Another sign of permanence is the fact that about eighty per cent own their homes. Thus, the analysis of the survey concludes that "most members have settled down in South Africa and are not intent on moving elsewhere" (Flame Lily Foundation 2003, 4).

What the age structure also indicates is that the people who joined Rhodesian associations in the mid-eighties, when they were first founded, tended to be more elderly. Settling to a new country was hardest – socially and economically – for those who retired on their arrival to South Africa. They had neither the work-related automatic social contacts with colleagues nor those with other parents of school-aged children. Finding a Rhodesian association seems to have been a life-line for many, particularly during the first few years of settling. "We joined in desperation," one elderly couple declared. Economically, elderly ex-Rhodesians in particular are faring much worse now than during the early years of settling. As I have explained in the introduction, the people whose assets were left in Zimbabwean bank accounts, and the ones whose income depended on pensions deriving from Zimbabwe, have been economically hardest hit by the emigration. Since the late 1990's, the economic decline and the soaring inflation have shrunk the Zimbabwean pensions to a pittance, and recently the payment of Zimbabwe Government pensions has ended altogether.

Branches

Each branch of the organization, situated in different parts of the country, had its own personal character. The national secretary of the association explained that “the Pretoria branch is vast and people are connected mainly through the newsletter. Maritzburg is like a big family. Durban is a bunch of quite old people spread around a large area, but run by a younger, energetic committee. Secunda is a small mining town with a very tightly-knit Rhodie-community, who has its own club house with weekly functions. And Cape is a bit problematic” (Field diary 1, pp. 87).⁹

A recent update on the membership of the branches¹⁰ shows that the (paid) members are divided in different branches in the following way:

Pretoria Branch:	1172 members
Durban Branch:	328 members
Pietermaritzburg Branch:	153 members
Highveld Branch (Secunda):	60 members

The disproportionate number of members in the Pretoria branch is partly explained by the fact that it caters also to members who do not have a Flame Lily Foundation branch in the vicinity. Popular ex-Rhodesian knowledge has it that most Rhodesians settled in Natal (Durban and Pietermaritzburg branches) after the main emigration in the 1980's. This, however, seems to be very poorly reflected in the membership. However, the analysis of the 2002 survey makes a suggestion that: “[in KwaZulu-Natal] there is less need for preserving one's identity through membership of a Rhodesian organization, or seeking contact and companionship through membership” (Flame Lily Foundation 2003, 3). My research also shows that here may be some truth in the suggestion. About a third to a half of the Rhodesians I worked with in Pietermaritzburg were not members of any Rhodesian organization, yet their “contacts and companionships” seemed to be as much Rhodesian as those of the people who were active and paid members of the organization. Another significant factor in the small number of paid-up members is that the Rhodesians in KwaZulu-Natal are slightly more elderly than in the other branches. This is reflected in the ability to participate in branch functions and in the ability pay membership fees. Durban branch chairman notes this on the branch newsletter: “Folks, in the Durban area, we have about 900 people on our mailing list, and yet only have 313 paid up members” (Ridgeback. Durban Branch Newsletter 4/1999).

⁹ During my fieldwork the Cape branch had just broken off from the national organization due to some disagreements. Subsequently there is, again, a Cape branch, in addition to which there are separate Rhodesian associations in the Cape.

¹⁰ Membership update was provided by the National Secretary on April 23, 2004 through personal communication.

The branches differed slightly in regard to the occupational structure of the members. The Cape Peninsula community seemed to consist of people whose background in Rhodesia was somewhat more in the administrative sector. The Pietermaritzburg community had used to work more in the private sector, or they had held government positions related to the railways, customs, police and the like. Most of the Pietermaritzburg community had been towns-people. The Secunda branch was the most unified in its occupational structure; among the branches it was distinctly a working class community. The unique character of each branch is reflected, for example, in the kind of social functions and activities that they offered. The Secunda branch activities were emphatically casual. At the time of my fieldwork, they were the only branch that had its own clubhouse with a very active bar. They held a social night every Friday; they had dress-up parties and discos, and they organized "indoor sports," namely, darts and pool. For example, in a 1999 newsletter, the branch chairman lists the forthcoming events:

Christmas eve (24th) is a Friday night, our normal social night, but this one is going to be a little different, we well start off with a bring and braai then get into the party mood with some good music, we will be giving out spot Christmas presents to a few lucky members, so if you have nothing to do on that night join us for a cheap fun filled evening/night (Balancing Rocks. Newsletter of the Flame Lily Foundation Highveld Branch 1999, 15).

The Cape Rhodes Society's social functions, on the other hand, were at the other end of the spectrum. Instead of darts or *braais*, their events include lunches, trips to vineyards, ladies' tea groups, and social events such as a "Champagne Breakfast at Mowbray Golf Club" (Rhodesians Worldwide 1999 15(2): 22). During my visit to the Cape Peninsula, one lady I talked with felt particularly strongly about the class difference between them and the other Rhodesian associations: "We do not have *braais*. They are so Afrikaans. So vulgar." Her husband mentioned that their way of commemorating the Remembrance Day¹¹ also differs from that of the Rhodesian associations elsewhere in the country: "It has nothing to do with UDI, it is un-political," he stated. He added that the 1990

¹¹ Remembrance Day, in the ex-Rhodesian communities, is celebrated as close to the 11th of November as possible. Like elsewhere, it is celebrated in honor of veterans of both World Wars. It is the date of signing the cease-fire between the allied forces and Germany in 1918. Between the wars the day was celebrated as the Armistice Day in Britain, France and the U.S. After the Second World War 11th of November is celebrated as the Veterans Day in the U.S. ("Veterans Day," Encyclopaedia Britannica 2007). Even more significantly, however, the ex-Rhodesians celebrate it as an Independence Day emphasizing that on the 11th of November 1965 Ian Smith unilaterally declared Rhodesia's independence.

centenary celebrations in Cape also differed markedly from those arranged elsewhere: "Ours had class. Ladies wore their evening gowns and men had their insignia of rank" (Field Diary 8, pp.1267-8).

The Pietermaritzburg branch – "my branch" – organized a social function once a month, usually on a Sunday at lunch time. The functions were advertised in the branch newsletter as well as in the local newspaper. Of these monthly get-togethers about three quarters were *bring and braais*.¹² Normally – weather permitting – the number of people present at any social function would be around forty. Annually organized events include a *braai* and a service on the Remembrance Day in November; a big Christmas party; and a Cake sale, which is a fund-raiser, but more significantly, a public relations event on behalf of the surrounding community. In addition, the committee held regular meetings and also interacted socially, arranging, for example, curry or soup nights. But let us now turn the focus on the key social event, the *bring and braai*.

¹² The *bring and braai* was also a very common form of entertaining at home outside of the association functions. In Pietermaritzburg, at least, people preferred lunch time invitations to dinners because many people, conscious of and concerned about carjacking and other forms of crime, avoided driving at night.

2. A SOCIAL FOOD EVENT – MAKING A MORAL COMMUNITY

Bring and Braai



Picture 7: *Braai-ing sausages*

Jo-burg braai

Flo (a lady in her fifties, whom I have not met before) has come to fetch me to my first *braai*. She chain-smokes and chats non-stop and swears at other drivers. Before we have driven ten kilometers she has given me her life story. She was born in Rhodesia, as was her mother. Her father worked for the railways, which meant that the family moved quite a lot. At one stage they had lived in Northern Rhodesia (Zambia) and Flo had gone to a boarding school in Broken Hill. After Zimbabwe's independence, her mother had moved to England, one of her sisters to Australia and the other sister still lived in Zimbabwe. Flo had also wanted to move to Australia, but she didn't qualify. She had been widowed and immigrated to South Africa with her two children. She had visited *Zim* a couple of years ago, but was "never going back again." She was contemplating on leaving South Africa, but at her age, she reckoned, it would be difficult. "But if I move and

wherever I move, Rhodesia will always be home. We have it here," she said, patting her chest. "The hospitality we had and the feeling of unity; that's nowhere else."

The *braai* is arranged in the garden of a private home, in a nice peaceful neighborhood on the outskirts of Johannesburg. The garden is noticeably green and flourishing in contrast to the yellow-gray winter landscape. Chairs have been arranged in a semi-circle, partly in the shade underneath a gazebo and partly in the sun. The eldest people choose to sit in the shade, underneath the shelter. People drift in with their folding chairs and cool bags. Everyone has brought their own drinks and own meat to *braai*. Flo, who had invited me, is also treating me at this *braai*. She has phoned in advance and asked for my food preferences. We have two kinds of salads with different dressings, some rolls and butter. She has also brought *boerewors*,¹³ wine and coca cola. In addition to sausages, people have brought marinated chicken, steaks or spareribs to *braai*. The host is in charge of the *braai*. The hostess brings out bowls of crisps and nuts to nibble at while the meats are being cooked. Two bowls of salads are also being passed around. An elderly gentleman sitting next to me offers me a beer from his small cool bag. He starts to reminisce about Rhodesia. Although his experience of Rhodesia had only lasted for seven years, he felt he had a strong and continuous Rhodesia-connection.¹⁴ He had returned to South Africa already in the beginning of 1960's when he saw that winds of change were soon going to be blowing over Rhodesia, when, as he said: "The writing was on the wall."

Not all the people present at the function seem to know each other very well. Ex-Rhodesians in this branch live spread out over a very vast area, and people seemed to meet mostly in such monthly get-togethers. People eat their food and converse mostly with the people they are sitting next to. Some mingle around. I have a long talk with Winnie, a woman in her sixties. Her sister's family still lives in Zimbabwe. Winnie said she had never wanted to leave Zimbabwe. It was her husband who had wanted to leave because he was ambushed twice. "But I would go back tomorrow if I could get a job!" Here the conversation flooded. Some voiced emphatically that they had no desire to go back to Zimbabwe as it is today. They would rather cherish the memory of Rhodesia as it was. People began to talk about what being Rhodesian means today. Flo said that she was always going to be a Rhodesian. Not everyone agreed: "There are only ex-Rhodesians and Zimbabweans," one man argued. "There was actually no such a thing as Rhodesian culture in Rhodesia," he continued. "Rhodesian culture was born here. What we had in Rhodesia was unconscious!" he concluded.

¹³ *Boerewors* is an Afrikaans word literally meaning farmer's sausage.

¹⁴ Although people take great pride in the length of their genealogical connection to Rhodesia, the membership in the ex-Rhodesian diaspora community rests on voluntary participation and people's active identification with Rhodesia, regardless of the length of their stay in the country.

Maritzburg braai

Queen Elizabeth Park is a very popular *braai* and picnic site in Pietermaritzburg. There is some wild game in the park, mostly zebra and buck, but otherwise the park is quite “urban.” The roads are paved and the toilets and picnic sites are well-marked. The fee at the entrance also restricts the clientele. The site chosen for our gathering is at the very end of the road that turns into dirt and narrows down before opening into a clearing where it is convenient to park. The early summer hues of greens of the trees and bushes glitter in the morning rays but the grass still struggles to grow on the dusty cracking ground.

We are early and get a shady spot for the car. Around us people are de-loading their cars and *bakkies*. Folding chairs and tables, bags of charcoal, cool bags, baskets full of plates and knives and forks, dishes wrapped in foil, coffee thermoses, needleworks and sunhats are lifted out from the trunks and backseats. Older ladies are helped out of the cars and greetings are exchanged. Two narrow paths start off from the grassy clearing where the cars are parked. One leads towards the toilets, the other to the picnic site, where we head.

The picnic site has been cleared of bush and tall grass and aloes that surround it. There are a couple of fixed cement tables and benches on the clearing. Trees grow here and there and a majestic fig tree stands tall in the middle of the site. People are busy arranging their chairs in a semi-circle facing the big fig. It is cozy and cool in the shelter of the trees.

Sunlight filters through the foliage creating a play of gleam and sparkle on the reddish ground. As more people drift to the site, another row of flower-printed or striped folding-chairs is formed behind the first one.¹⁵ Ladies have left their cardigans in their cars. They wear dresses or skirts brightly colored in whites and pinks and blues. Their shoes are sensible and hair – with very few exceptions – is white or grey. Their husbands – as they themselves laughingly claim – are dressed in the Rhodesian national costume: *veldskoene* with long socks folded below the knee (although some people argue that no socks should be worn with *vellies* and some are actually wearing sandals), shorts (colored khaki or beige), a white shirt and a hat. (Graham has decorated his hat with a guinea fowl feather.) We spread some blankets on the ground in front of the chairs and make ourselves comfortable. The chatter is switched on.

Vincent and Stan hoist the Rhodesian flag onto a tree. Vincent always brings it along to Rhodie *braais*. The men pop open beer bottles. “Have you noticed that we drink a lot of beer down here?” Vincent had asked me at my first Maritzburg *braai*. [I had actually thought that they drank fairly little (women very, very little) compared to my previous “white settler fieldwork” in Kenya, where I had lived next to a country club bar and where people

¹⁵ Altogether there were about 40-50 people most of whom were between 60-70 years.

drank a lot.] "Oh those Kenyans, don't they drink just gin and tonic? Aren't they English types up there?" Vincent had asked.

Marion arranges *Rhodesiana* on a table for people to purchase. T-shirts with prints such as "I'm proud to be a Rhodesian" or "We made Rhodesia great" are hung on the tree branches. The table is covered with more memorabilia: white and blue and green golf shirts and jerseys with an appliquéd flame lily, kettle holders and tea cozies with a flame lily, flame lily pins and brooches, tea spoons each with a picture of a different Rhodesian landscape or town on it, flame lily stickers and badges and writing paper, miniature Rhodesian flags, books, such as Ian Smith's memoirs "*The Great Betrayal*," John Edmond's (a famous troopie singer) memoirs, and "*Gardening in Rhodesia*." On a big round stone table stands a copper coin collection glass jar for people to donate money for the branch charity.

Graham and Susan, the chairman and the secretary of the Maritzburg branch, go around talking to people. Graham offers to *braai* the meat and sausages for single ladies. As the first part of the name of the function – *bring* and *braai* – suggests, every household is responsible for bringing its own food and drinks to the function. Sometimes a bowl of salad may be passed around to be shared with others, but never meat. I have come with Graham and Susan's family and share their food. We're having *boerewors* and chicken, bean salad, beetroot salad, green salad and cottage cheese, rolls and butter. Graham is in charge of the *braai*, as he always is in our gatherings. His *braai* is an old tin barrel cut in half and placed to stand on folding legs. The charcoal is put inside and when it's done a wire rack is placed on top. The *braai* has to be reasonably big, because there is meat to be cooked for about forty people. On some occasions, some men (such as Stuart, whose *braai* is an old washing machine drum) bring their own *braais* with them. The men take meat and sausages to the *braai*, while the women are setting the tables with salads and bread and the rest. Women are in charge of the vegetables. (Sometimes I bring things like butternut or aubergine in foil to a *braai*. The men *braai* those for me but ask me to come and tell when they're done. They claim they cannot tell about veggies.)

People move their chairs to follow the shade. Meat sizzles, and the smell of dripping grease lingers in the air. People eat their food in small groups that consist either of family members or of two or three couples. A relaxed, drowsy feeling hovers about. People talk about those who've just been to *Zim* and those that are planning to go, of how everything is deteriorating up there, of the ridiculous amount that their pensions from Zimbabwe have shrunk to, of how the *Zim* government cannot afford the foreign currency to pay these pensions, of the new party and whether it will have a chance in the up-coming elections. And they talk about their Christmas plans, whether their children are coming to spend the holidays with them or not, how prices have gone up from last year (the price of petrol in particular), of people who've been ill, and of how hot it is again.

Bring and Braai as a Social Food Event

The *bring and braai* is a social food event,¹⁶ a festive occasion of commensality. It is a reoccurring social event where particular foods are prepared and consumed in ways that trigger remembrance and deep emotion. As Sidney Mintz (1996, 7) reminds us, for humans, eating is never “purely biological.” Foods eaten and techniques employed in processing the food have histories that are associated with those who eat them. Nor is the food “just eaten”; its consumption is always culturally conditioned. Food habits, Mintz further emphasizes, can acquire enduring sentimental power and are thus “repeatedly constitutive of one’s culturally specific humanity” (ibid., 71).

The “homely” foodways refashioned and discussed in the sphere of the *bring and braai* attest to the unique ability of food to convey cultural meaning in diaspora. This food does not merely feed the stomachs; it emphatically nurtures the ties to homeland and the ties that bind the consuming community. According to Charon Cardona (2004, 40), who discusses Cuban diaspora in Australia, the Cubans were obsessed with remembering the way things used to taste back home. The sensation, aroma, flavor and tang of particular foods are continuously discussed, replicated, transformed and savored. Charon Cardona argues that through eating and sharing food, migrant groups remember their homeland and recreate a cultural community at a distance from the homeland. She suggests, borrowing from Ghassan Hage (1997, 108), that this type of recreation is a type of positive nostalgia, “which does not necessarily involve a desire to ‘go back’ but promotes a desire of ‘being there *here*’” (2004, 43). This sense of “being there here” closely captures the essence of the *bring and braai* as a diaspora food event. By participating in such social food events one stays home-bound by social and sensual memories triggered by the repeated features and sequenced actions characteristic to the *braai* event. In addition, the get-together makes and maintains the present diaspora community linking it to other ex-Rhodesian communities worldwide.

Bring and braai is the most common form of a diaspora social function in the ex-Rhodesian society not only in South Africa, but also in other places where ex-Rhodesian communities have formed.¹⁷ An advertisement

¹⁶ My use of the concept “food event” differs from the way Mary Douglas uses it. For Douglas, a food event “is an occasion when food is eaten, without prejudice as to whether it constitutes a meal or not” (1974, 744). I use the term “food event” correspondingly with Douglas’s “meal” or “structured event,” which is “a social occasion, which is organised according to rules prescribing time, place and sequence of actions. If food is eaten as part of a structured event, then we have a ‘meal’” (Ibid.).

¹⁷ In addition to the *bring and braai*, there are other social food events with their own defining features in the ex-Rhodesian community in South Africa. A *bring and share* is a meal where every household brings one dish (e.g. a curry or a soup) for all the participants to share. The type of the dish is usually defined in

in the newsletter of the Rhodesian Association of Western Australia indicates that their diaspora food event is very similar to the South African version:

Houghtons Annual Braai, Sunday, 7th October, 11.30 onward. LOOK FOR THE [picture of the green and white UDI Rhodesian flag]. Annual Braai set in beautiful surroundings under the shade of giant trees, at Houghtons Winery (...) Bring your meat, drinks, rolls, salad etc., and don't forget your deckchairs, and enjoy a great day out with other Rhodies (Bundu Times 2001, 15).

A report of the Rhodesian Association meeting in the United States pictures a small gathering of a youngish (by South African standards) group of people standing in front of two large pine trees to which the Rhodesian green and white flag is fastened. The text reads:

20 Rhodesians and 2 honorary Rhodesians gathered together for a braai and good company in the high country of Arizona (...) It was a wonderful gathering in the clean crisp Arizona air with tall pine trees and the swirl of braai smoke in the air. Before everyone left it was decided to make this gathering an annual event and to try to coincide it with the anniversary of Rhodes and Founders weekend¹⁸ (Rhodesians Worldwide 2001: 23-24).

At a Rhodesian reunion in Canada:

People started arriving around noon, and the flag was raised at 12.45. Lunch followed but the proposed rugby match (...) was cancelled as the field was unsuitable (...) The fires were lit around 5 pm and food started at 6-ish. We couldn't keep up with the demand for sadza¹⁹ and the grub went down very well, as did the biltong and the Castle lager. The flag was lowered and

a manner that renders all the dishes (relatively) equally elaborate. There are also cocktail events, where each participant household brings a plate of either sweet or savory for all to consume. Both of these events are arranged indoors.

¹⁸ *Rhodes and Founders* was a public holiday in Rhodesia, a long weekend in mid-winter, celebrated on the second Monday and Tuesday of July. It was a conjunction of two previous public holidays: the birthday of Cecil Rhodes on the 5th of July and Founders' Day on the 6th of July to commemorate the day the Pioneer Column crossed the Shashi River (Encyclopaedia Rhodesia 1973, 136; 306). After Zimbabwe's independence, the holiday was renamed "Heroes' and Ancestors' Day."

¹⁹ *Sadza* is the staple diet of most of Zimbabwe's indigenous peoples. It is a thickened porridge, most commonly made of white maize mealie meal. Usually sadza is accompanied with a meat stew or a vegetable relish (*Sadza ne Nyama* 2005, 1).

(...) an area was cleared for dancing, John Edmond tapes were listened to, and the whole evening was thoroughly enjoyed by all (Rhodesians Worldwide 1993: 16).

In the *bring and braais* I took part, as well as in these worldwide *braai* examples above, the key features of the food events are very similar from one community to the next. The elements that characterize it include the choice of venue, the marking of the site as Rhodesian, the selection of food, the way the food is prepared and consumed, and the informality of socializing. To begin with, a proper *bring and braai* is always set up in a “beautiful surrounding,” in a pleasant place out-in-the-open. The beautiful surrounding could be a nice garden, a designated picnic area in a park, or a tourist venue. If there is a water element in the site – such as a dam, or a river, or the sea – the party arranges itself in such away as to offer everyone a pleasing view. In the South African *braais* people seated themselves as they arrived. The semi-circle shape into which the deck chairs were invariably arranged offered all the participants a view of the main attractive feature of the landscape. At the same time this shape allowed everyone a view of each other. It was also a very un-hierarchical seating arrangement; no-one sat at the center, backs were turned to no-one. Their backs were turned towards other groups who might be picnicking near-by. In the South African get-togethers the best pleasant place out-in-the-open would also be an easily accessible place. Preferably, one should be able to park as close to the *braai* site as possible. In the Pietermaritzburg branch committee meeting prior to the function I have described above, the exact place of the gathering in the park was discussed. We couldn’t go up on the hill because it would be too far from the car park to carry all the gear. We should be reasonably near to the toilets and there should be plenty of shade, thus the place would be granny-friendly in all aspects. The place should also be secluded enough so that we wouldn’t have to share our blankets with the “Indian community” who were also keen on Sunday picnics.

“Being out in the open” is a central element of the *bring and braai* set up. As I have discussed earlier, the closeness of the bush, the wilderness or the vast spaces were considered an essence of Rhodesian lifestyle. For one, the abundance of space was seen as “offering boundless opportunity for recreation and leisure” (Rhodesia’s National Parks, the Matopos, n. d.). In addition to space, “[T]he climate of Rhodesia is probably as near perfect as anywhere in the world and it is possible to enjoy outdoor recreation all the year round” (Great Spaces Washed with Sun 1967, 178). Such an appreciation of an outdoor life was often seen as a decisive element in “Rhodesian character” (e.g., Godwin and Hancock 1999, 28). It is noticeable that the outdoors, or “vast spaces” are presented as locations for recreation and leisure. There is thus an implicit understanding that the abundance of space is enjoyed by urbanites, during their time off-work: “At week-ends and during holidays Rhodesians answer the call of the sunshine

and unlimited space. They seek freedom on the open road, on the lakes and dams and wandering on the veld enjoying the wonders of nature" (Great Spaces...1967, 178). But being outdoors did not mean roughing it. The preferable outdoor places in South Africa offered beautiful surroundings, easy accessibility and convenience; such as they did in colonial Rhodesia.²⁰

Reports of the *braais* in the newsletters and on web pages are mostly very scant. They rarely give any account of what was actually done (except perhaps for the consumption of food and drink). Neither do they often report on what was talked about during the event. But they invariably give clues about the *Rhodesianness* of the event. The *braai* site is often marked as Rhodesian with some national symbols. In the Pietermaritzburg branch social events Vincent was always in charge of bringing and hoisting his green and white flag. The flag also demarcated the sites as temporarily Rhodesian-occupied in the Australian, Canadian, as well as the U.S. examples. A report on the UK national annual *braai*, arranged at Leedon's Park in Worcestershire, follows the line: "The woodpile was growing smaller and the smell of Boerewors and steak could be smelt all over the site. The site was now covered in Green and White" (The Baobab 2005, my emphasis). The Maritzburg table of Rhodesiana was also a collection of items portraying the national symbols, such as the flag, the coat of arms, the flame lily, and icon-like Rhodesian landscapes. The mention of the Rhodes and Founders weekend in the scanty note about the Arizona *braai* immediately awakes in the reader the memory of a mid-winter long weekend often spent in some natural resort in Rhodesia, or on the beaches of Beira, in Mozambique. The reference to John Edmond (one of the favorite Rhodesian performers, particularly known for his songs during the "Bush War") has the same effect. In the UK and Canada national annual *braais* such symbols of Rhodesianness were largely particular items of food and drink: *boerewors*, biltong, Castle beer and *sadza*.

²⁰ There is a striking *déjà-vu* when one looks at pictures in the tourist brochures that the Rhodesia and Nyasaland Tourist Board published in the fifties. In one particular Technicolor picture, a group of young adults is picnicking on the shore of the Maleme Dam at the Matopos Hills outside Bulawayo. Majestic granite boulders and sturdy acacia on the background of the picture pronounce a striking contrast to this sophisticated white gathering. A young man with a crew cut is teaching a small boy to fish; another man is unloading picnic baskets from the back of his car. The car is parked right on the shore, two or three meters from where the young women are sitting on their blankets, their hoop dresses neatly wrapped around their knees. A well-coiffed young lady in a bright red dress has taken a thermos out of the picnic box; another is lying comfortably on her side, listening to the wireless. Two older men sit in a rowing boat in the middle of the serene dam "amid a landscape sculptured by the elements over past millions of years into a fascinating panorama, strange and imposing under the influences of changing light" (Rhodesia's National Parks, the Matopos. N.d.).

The selection of food and the way it is cooked and consumed form the key repetitive elements in this social food event. Meat is self-evidently the centerpiece of the *braai* meal.²¹ Marinated chicken, lamb or pork chops, steaks, ribs and sausages could all be *braaied*. In addition to meat, potatoes and vegetables may also be cooked on the *braai*, but they are secondary as are the salads and rolls; they accompany the meat. That *braai* is such a significant institution in South Africa, a “quintessential culinary experience” as one author calls it,²² is well reflected in the excessive variety of individually packed *braai*-meals on the shelves of South African supermarkets: boerewors and choice of meat, kebabs – varieties of meat, poultry or fish accompanied with vegetables and fruit on a skewer – vegetables, such as butternut, green pepper or tomato, filled with cheese and herbs, *mielie* cobs in foil with spiced butter on the side, assorted small portions of salads and so forth.

The *braai* as a meal, with meat as a centerpiece and vegetables that accompany it, corresponds with Mary Douglas’ (1997 [1975]) analysis of the English basic meal of A + 2B (where A is the stressed main ingredient and B is an unstressed ingredient), a basic formula of which there may be variations and elaborations. Often the *braai* could be seen as an elaboration of the basic formula, a festive meal combining 2A + 4B (for example, our meal in the Maritzburg *braai* consisting of boerewors and chicken, bean salad, beetroot salad, green salad and cottage cheese.) Douglas’ argument is that the repetition of A + 2B pattern signifies that each meal carries within it something of the structure and meaning of all other meals: “each meal is a structured social event which structures others in its own image” (ibid., 44). By participating in this structured sequence of meals repeatedly, one expresses and experiences family membership, or in this case membership in the diaspora community. The key point in Douglas’ analysis lies in the observation she makes about the relationship between meals. The relation between the meals is a system of repeated analogies. To be a meal, each food event must recall the basic structure of other food events. Every meal may, therefore, be seen as a metonym, evoking other meals.

It is not only the food as such which is repeated, but the whole set up of the meal, including its preparation. The gendered division of labor in the preparation of the meal is rather strictly followed. In one discussion

²¹ My being a vegetarian was not the problem I had presumed it to be in this very meat-oriented community. I was, however, often brought soy sausages, because “at least they look like meat.” Health issues that vegetarianism was often connected to were not alien in South Africa. All the big shops sold vegetarian *braai*-packs and all restaurants catered to vegetarians. I assume that for a man this food preference would have been more difficult to explain. (See Sutton 1997 for an account of being a vegetarian food anthropologist in Greece.)

²² “[A braai] is an institution in households from Messina to Cape Town, bridging social and economic canyons, and even giving us a sense of our common identity” (Savides 2005).

I asked Ken whether the *braais* in Rhodesia were similar to the South African ones, whether the men would cook the meat. He replied:

Absolutely, absolutely. That's not a woman's job. Men do the *braai-ing*. If there's salads or little extras to be had, the women would do that sort of thing, yeah. That's basically how it goes. That the men would do the *braai-ing* (...) We used to have *braais* regularly [in Rhodesia]. I mean all Rhodesians would *braai*. I mean that was it. If you didn't *braai*, you weren't a Rhodesian. (Ken)

Thus, according to the *braai* division of labor, women do the "extras." They might prepare the side dishes in advance at home: they make the salads and prepare and wrap in foil the vegetables that are cooked on the fire. At the *braai* site they set the tables. But the most important part of this festive meal is the cooking of meat outside on fire. This is self-evidently a male concern, as it is in many other "Western" societies (e.g., Humphrey 1988). Humphrey cites Thomas Adler, who has suggested that [in traditional American cuisine] male cookery is connected to festive, social and gastronomically experimental occasions. There is a "male affinity for outdoor cooking, in which the underlying process is a direct conjunction between the food and the fire. Roasting (whether done indoors or out) is for many people somehow a natural and masculine trait, in contrast to boiling, which is seen as a process of female cookery" (Adler 1980, 53; ref., Humphrey 1988, 161). This conforms to the way food was cooked at the *braais*. The gendered dividing line is not only between meat and vegetables, but more pointedly between cooking in the house and cooking on the *braai*.²³

The *braaing* of meat was thus exclusively a male affair. The host of the event was in charge of the *braai*. In those association *braais* that were not arranged in someone's private garden, the chairman acted as the host. There was no predestined, hierarchical order according to which individual meat portions were roasted. Every man was in charge of taking his household's food to the *braai*. Every man should know how to *braai* meat. Ideally, learning to *braai* is seen as a "father-son experience," where men pass down their skills and methods of *braaing* to the boys.²⁴ The correct way

²³ At home the division of labor in regard to cooking meat and vegetables could be reversed. For example, Susan would do the roast beef, while Graham would mash the potatoes. The carving of meat at the table was, however, always done by the man of the house.

²⁴ A South African writer currently living in Boston fondly remembers *braaing* as a unique father-son experience, which boys learned by watching and listening to their fathers and eventually by participating in the act: "First of all, he taught me, the heat should be spread evenly over the whole grill area. Second, a good indication of the correct heat is to hold your hand over the grid and count to 10. If you have to pull it back before then, it's too hot. Any later, too cold. Third,

to *braai* meat was a topic of endless dispute and jocular talk. As the men were *braaiing* they would stand together by the braai, sip their beers and talk. While tenderly turning and inspecting the cooking meat, they would ridicule small dried up steaks they might have had in England: red meat should always be juicy and rare (although the degree of rareness could, again, be argued about) and the steaks huge. As the meat sizzled the men would recall the insurmountable taste of the beef in Rhodesia.

Commemorative Food

But when from a long-distant past nothing subsists, after the people are dead, after the things are broken and scattered, taste and smell alone, more fragile but more enduring, more unsubstantial, more persistent, more faithful, remain poised a long time, like souls, remembering, waiting, hoping, amid the ruins of all the rest; and bear unflinchingly, in the tiny and almost impalpable drop of their essence, the vast structure of recollection (Proust 1982, 50-51).

There is a consensus in anthropology that food has an extraordinary ability to convey meanings. Food, like Counihan and Van Esterik write, “touches everything” (1997, 1). It is an economic and a political issue ranging from global to household and individual levels. Through sharing food, solidarities and social differences are created and boundaries drawn. Thus, food is an apt identity marker, especially amongst ethnic minorities or exile communities. One aspect of food’s symbolic significance, consequential in regard to the *bring and braai*, lies in its ability to carry memories. In his work on food and memory on the island of Kalymnos in Greece, David Sutton (2001) proposes that food is memorable because it is both a sensual as well as a social experience. Tasting food from home reconnects one in memory to the place of belonging as well as to the people together with whom one has eaten. Sharing such food binds people together in the present, people with whom it is possible to share these memories. In addition to food being essentially about sensuous social experience and thereby memorable, Sutton argues, based on Mary Douglas’ (1997 [1975]) classic analysis of the structure of the meal, that food may be considered good to remember with because of the structural repetition and the metonymic nature of food events.

you can always regulate the temperature by moving the grid up or down. It’s best to start high and move down as the coals become cooler. And finally, put the chicken or meat that needs to cook the longest on first. After the steaks are put on, add some thin pieces of wood to *braai* them in the flames. Vegetables such as potatoes in foil, onions, and squash are placed under the grid in the red-hot coals” (Savides 2002, 1).

In diaspora communities food is often considered to unite the consumers to a shared past and a shared place in the past through the fact that food itself may be commemorative, something of home. In the experience of exile groups, David Sutton argues, food may evoke through synesthesia (multisensory experience) the idea of “returning to the whole” in the face of fragmentation (2001, 73-75; see also Seremetakis 1994). Multisensory experience connected to food from home reconnects to experiences and places one has left behind. Thus, Marcel Proust’s famous *madeleine* description above indicates the ability of particular food to evoke a sense of place and time left behind; it signifies the evocative power of sensory parts to recall and reveal the whole, the vast structure, to which it belonged in past times or past places (Sutton 2001, 84; see also Caplan 1994, 6). This is an essential point in a diaspora food event, where the food items and the way of cooking form commemorative acts; and where the event as a whole is a major site of social memory.

In expatriate communities, great affective value is often placed on food from home and considerable trouble is taken in order to obtain such food. Among Greek students in London, Elia Petridou (2001, 90) observes, food from home takes up a considerable amount of space and weight in the students’ luggage on their return to the UK after vacations in Greece. Even during the term, food parcels arrive by post, often on a regular basis. Petridou argues that food from home is used to provide a sense of belonging through the experience of taste. David Sutton suggests that for migrants, food is essential to reconstructing wholeness, in countering the fragmentation of experience. *Pestellomata*, food packages sent to migrants, may be considered as parts that recall the whole: “*pestellomata* are a piece of homeland, carrying inside them its sun and its sea, its wonderful smells” (Kapella 1981, 35; cit. Sutton 2001, 78). Examining the meanings of food exchange in the Cook Island diaspora, Kalissa Alexeyeff discusses the affective materiality of food from home. She shows how the Cook Islanders take impressive quantities of food as gifts when they travel abroad to visit their relatives. She suggests that home-grown food “creates affective excess when it travels overseas. It presents the bounty of home; the bounty of food and the bounty of sustaining loving relationships” (2004, 70). New Zealand food, in contrast, is seen to lack something, namely the emotional substance of home-grown food.

For most ex-Rhodesians this immediate tie between homeland, kin, and home-grown food is broken. However, today various web-shops make it relatively easy to stay taste-bound to homeland. Ex-Rhodesian and South African expatriate web sites are filled with food advertisements that tickle the memory: looking at the pictures of old packages and wrappings brings to mouth the cherished familiar taste while simultaneously bringing

to mind the memory of eating particular food items.²⁵ In order to facilitate expatriates *braai*-ing properly outside of Southern Africa, some butcheries (e.g. in England and in the U.S.) specialize in making *boerewors* and *biltong* (dried venison). There are also web sites²⁶ through which it is possible to order meat or utensils for making your own sausages at home. And, as my examples show, Castle beer figures prominently in the worldwide *braais*.²⁷

Angela Cheater, who discusses identity-formation in Rhodesian settler diaspora and focuses particularly on diasporic communities outside of Africa, considers a significant feature of the diaspora to be the methodical and reflexive construction of an explicitly “African” identity. “From being ‘westerners’ in Africa, then, the ‘Rhodies’ rapidly transmogrified into ‘Africans’ in the west, using linguistic markers, consuming Zimbabwean ethnic foods (...) to mark themselves as ‘different’, a ‘tribal’ people committed to more ‘social’ relations than the individualism of western countries” (1999, 8). Cheater continues:

[P]erhaps the most obvious cultural marker of the ‘African’ identity of the ‘Rhodesian’ diaspora is public, ceremonial commensality. Eating ‘Rhodie’ ethnic foods also inverts settler practices. In colonial Rhodesia, the staple *sadza* (stiff maize porridge) was generally regarded as cheap and coarse ‘African food’ (...) What sets ‘Rhodie’ ceremonial *braais* apart from all other barbeques is that they must offer *sadza*” (ibid., 9).

Sadza has become to these modern day ex-Rhodesians the archetypal food from home, the equivalent of “steak and kidney pie” in the memories of early Rhodesian pioneers, whose daily meals consisted of the very items – mealie meal and venison – now considered to epitomize the true taste of home. The *sadza* talk thus patently resonates with an earlier appetite for food from home:

Judging from the many letters written in the early days of Rhodesia, the thing that the pioneers most missed when they were roaming the country was the sort of cooking they had

²⁵ For example, one South African expatriate site’s on-line shop advertises a *Big 5 Survival Kit* “for those brave enough to test themselves by relocating outside of South Africa (...) The kit (...) is to be used whenever the need for a taste of home gets too much to bear” (RSA-Overseas. The South African Expat’s One-stop On-line Resource. <http://www.rsa-overseas.com>). The kit consists of Mrs. Ball’s Peach Chutney, Five Roses Tea, Ouma Rusks, Pyotts Ramonay Cream Biscuits, Cadbury Dairy Milk.

²⁶ For example: Biltongmakers.com (<http://www.biltongmakers.com>); Biltong, Boerewors, Droewors – Susman’s Best Beef Biltong Co Ltd. Online Shop (<http://www.biltong.co.uk>).

²⁷ According to Angela Cheater, the demand for “ethnic” beer is also large enough to support specialist importers, themselves members of the diaspora in Scotland and Australia (1999, fn. 42).

enjoyed at home. Their usual fare was mealie meal and venison for breakfast, lunch and dinner and so, whenever the opportunity arose to bring relief to their homesick palates, the event made a great impression on their memories (Oliver 1964, 26).

In South Africa, *sadza* as the “authentic” African food did not have the same glorified part in the totality of a *braai* commemorative meal, as it seems to have in ex-Rhodesian ceremonial meals in further corners of the world, such as the U.S. or Australia. In fact, I was never offered *sadza* at any of the *braais* I attended in South Africa, in spite of the fact that it was repeatedly mentioned as the authentic Rhodesian staple food. During the first *braai* I attended in Pietermaritzburg, Pam regretted that she had forgotten to prepare *sadza* for me. Susan and Pam asked me whether I had ever tasted it. I replied that I had had *ugali*, which I presumed to be similar to *sadza*. “What do they put in it?” Susan asked. “Oh, just maize meal and water,” I said. “Oh, no, no, no. You must put some syrup and cream in. Or then have it with tomato and onion relish,” Susan said. At another occasion, two ex-Rhodesian men in a bar were having a war-talk: from ambushes and casualties and landmines they shifted to African recipes. Although it might seem an odd discursive transition, these topics were clearly connected. Their military experience in the “Bush War” had taught them the necessary bush skills, including cooking. In sharing memories of war and food, the men seemed to be competing for authenticity, which would be credited to the one who expressed the most solid knowledge of local African names of plants and animals as well as of survival skills in the bush.

Sadza might not have been a part of regular white Rhodesian cuisine after pioneering days; however, it has become the primary commemorative food the eating of which brings one into connection with generalized Africa, rather than with one’s personal memories of everyday meals at home. The meanings of *sadza* as an indigenous African staple food heightened to the status of the memory food in Rhodesian diaspora reflects the point made by Seremetakis (1994) (and by Mintz (1996) from another angle), that food items have their own layered histories, which influence their ability or inability to become socially memorable:

[N]ot any object or substance can acquire meaning and value by being inserted into rules, times and spaces of commensality which “permit” it to be consumed, shared, exchanged and enjoyed. Rather, artifacts are in themselves histories of prior commensal events and emotional sensory exchanges, and it is these very histories that are exchanged at commensal events and that qualify the object as commensal in the first place (Seremetakis 1994, 11).

In the ex-Rhodesian community, *braaied* meat and *sadza* were the culminations of the memory cuisine; they had an ability to engender incessant commentary and to evoke layers of memory. Like bread in Italy

(cf., Mintz 1996, 97), *braai*-ing meat and preparing *sadza* were “subjects of sufficient familiarity and importance to be the basis of discourse.” Such subjects, Mintz says, have an ability to unite people culturally. Thus, what makes a cuisine requires a population that eats that cuisine with sufficient frequency to consider themselves as its experts. “They all believe, and care that they believe, that they know what it consists of, how it is made and how it should taste” (1996, 96). In general, the colonial Rhodesian cuisine was a mixture of English food with South African, with additions from local African cuisines, the neighboring Portuguese, as well as from the kitchens of various European ethnic minorities, chiefly the Italians and the Greeks. These ethnic minorities in colonial Rhodesia held strongly onto their native cuisines.²⁸

The Rhodesian diaspora web sites almost invariably include a collection of recipes considered to crystallize the taste of home. The Rhodesians Worldwide website’s list of recipes includes: rusks (dry biscuits), *biltong* (dried venison), *bobotie* (a minced meat dish with a custard topping), *boerewors* (sausages), Cape Brandy pudding, guinea fowl, *koeksusters* (deep-fried syrupy “doughnuts”), *melkert* (custard tart), *peri peri* chicken, *sosaties* (skewers of meat marinated in curry sauce), and spicy mutton curry (Rhodesians Worldwide – Recipes 2007). Significantly, perhaps the guinea fowl and the *peri peri* chicken excepting, all the dishes – identified as Rhodesian – originate from South Africa, and some have a Malay origin. The *braai* itself was very much a South African import.

Because so many of the food items considered memorably Rhodesian had originated in South Africa, the culinary break from Rhodesia has been minimal in the Ex-Rhodesian community in South Africa. Thus the tastes missed from home in further worldwide corners of Rhodesian diaspora are widely available in South Africa. Consequently, when the people I talked with were thinking of tastes they missed from home, they seldom reminisced about particular dishes as such, but very often mentioned brand names and labels (such as *Mazowe* orange juice) or places where one could buy, for example, the “best ice cream” (that would be the Eskimo

²⁸ The space does not permit me to go into the significance of these cuisines in any more detail, but Francesca’s recollection of Rhodesian-Italian food may act as an example: “My grandmother had things which she used to make, you know, that have survived in our kind of culture. Like at Christmas especially all the aunts and everybody would be at my grandmother’s house and they’d all make gnocchi and I remember all the aunts lined up along the counter and making these. It’s pasta made of potatoes and eggs and stuff and you flick it off the fork and it makes the shell and then you boil it in water and you serve it with tomato. So that was a special thing we had at Christmas. And then there was her risotto recipe and what else did she make – ravioli. My father always talked about how the thing he really likes is polenta. And now, in Italy they eat yellow maize. But he said no, we just used what we could get, which was white maize. So he grew up with like a Zimbabwe version of the Italian cooking of polenta.

Hut in Bulawayo). Therefore, certain names and labels of food may act as temporal and spatial icons; they are attached to and identified with particular places. Recalling these names immediately evokes the taste of the remembered food, and often calls forth a narrative – some occasion of eating that particular food. Through reciting names and remembering tastes one calls forth the wholeness of which they were part.

And so, every morning at five a.m., Graham and Susan woke up, switched on the teakettle, and had a nice cup of *Tanganda tea* (picked from the Eastern Highlands of Zimbabwe) in bed before they got up. This habitual morning routine was an un verbalized intimate practice of staying connected to home-place. Waking up to *Tanganda tea* in South Africa, drinking Castle lager in Western Australia, *braai-ing boerewors* at an English nature reserve are all examples of staying, through multisensual experience, taste-bound to home. Although the acts of tasting and the memories that familiar tastes evoke are obviously individually experienced, the tasting of home is simultaneously a deeply socially cementing experience. As David Sutton notes (2001, 84) the wholeness or fullness that consuming such food from home might evoke is tied to the fact that in the act of eating food from home while in exile, the consumers attach themselves to an imagined community, to others who are eating that same food. Thus, the sensual memories created by “tasting home” are essentially social; they are pivotal in the making of the diaspora community.

Eating Together – Hospitality Reconsidered

Drinks are for strangers, acquaintances, workmen, and family. Meals are for family, close friends, honored guests. The grand operator of the system is the line between intimacy and distance (Douglas 1997 [1975], 41).

My internalization into the ex-Rhodesian community took largely place in my host family's kitchen. On my first visit, I was taken directly to the kitchen (not the dining room, for example) to have family dinner around the kitchen table. I was immediately, concretely and symbolically embraced within the family. On my next visit, I was already involved in kitchen duties, finding my way through the cupboards in order to set the table and prepare a salad. As my fieldwork progressed I was given more and more cooking responsibilities both in the association's functions (baking for the cake sale and bringing a savory dish for the Christmas cocktail party) and at my host family's household. By the end of my fieldwork I was expected to share the kitchen responsibilities as an adult woman in the house: from preparing picnic meals and sandwich lunches to cooking full dinner. Perhaps the most pleasant moments of my fieldwork were spent in Graham and Susan's kitchen: We would cook together – Susan would be in charge, I would make the salad, Graham would mash the potatoes. Or Susan and Pam would be making fudge and I would keep them company.

We would work together and talk. Very often I would share family dinner around the kitchen table, a meal which always began with all of us holding hands and Graham saying grace. I felt that cooking and eating together formed the strongest family bond; feeding expressed the deepest care.²⁹

The sharing of meals, Mary Douglas argues (1997 [1975]), draws the boundaries of the family, symbolically and emotionally.³⁰ The sharing of food creates bonds between people; it makes, maintains, and marks social relationships, distinctions and boundaries. Commensality may thus be seen as corresponding to communality (Meigs 1997, 102). Graham and Susan's warm-hearted hospitality reflected the ex-Rhodesian uncomplicated and straightforward sociability, which was a cherished practice of Rhodesian emphasis on (white) solidarity and lack of hierarchy. The newcomer or the visitor was embraced within familial at-homeness. This kind of moral practice of sharing food, and particularly of sharing family occasions with visitors, was considered as an example of Rhodesian kind and caring conduct.

But, as Marcel Mauss has shown in his famous work *The Gift* (1990 [1923]), exchange and sharing of food also oblige and indebt.³¹ The reciprocity connected to generosity in giving food is linked to a sense of indebtedness the gift creates in the recipient. Nancy Munn demonstrates how in the Gawan society the reciprocity of exchange necessitates memory evocation. She argues that exchange and remembering connect the present moment both to the past (by fulfilling a past debt) and to the future (by creating potential debts). Thus the gift (even if it is perishable, such as food) is made memorable, because it is extended to the future through

²⁹ Food, David Sutton writes (2001, 5), is an apt source of kinship symbolism, because of its ability to create "shared substance." The symbolic significance is connected to the idea that food is seen as transforming the outside into the inside "blood into food and food into blood" as for example in the Nuer case. "Among the Nuer, food sharing creates a quasi-blood bond between people. Ideally relatives (...) celebrated their 'oneness of blood' through constant sharing of food" (Hutchinson 1996, 164).

³⁰ Douglas' analysis of a meal, it needs to be noted, draws on the practices of upper-middle class English family. (See Beardsworth and Keil 1997, 75 for critique.) This upper-middle class domesticity has its roots in the Victorian era that raised the house as the shrine of domestic virtues: "The highest compliment that could be paid any stranger was admission to the family table" (Strong 2002, 273). The dinner party was the culminating meal of the era. By 1850's the dinner party had become an expression of class solidarity. It demonstrated that the person invited was accepted to the same social standing as the hosts (*ibid.*).

³¹ Mauss's idea that the exchange and sharing of food is a key medium of creating and maintaining bonds of solidarity and alliances – as well as potentially making enemies – is widely shared. Thus, among the Nuer, for example, a community leader is "someone who 'helps others to eat' by (...) extending hospitality to all and sundry while simultaneously restricting his reliance on the hospitality of others" (Hutchinson 1996, 167).

memory connected to the act of giving (1986, 62-63). In Gawa food may be converted into fame through acts of generosity. Giving food away to overseas visitors is seen as initiating a process of extension both of the donor and of the immediate moment and place, when visitors may spread favorable accounts of Gawan hospitality (ibid., 50). In a similar way, on the Greek island of Kalymnos, David Sutton shows, everyday hospitality is also part of creating a memorable impression. But unlike in the Gawan society, the hospitality does not necessarily need to be returned. However, the act of hospitality needs to be witnessed, and it is the narrative about hospitality, which provides a return of the gift. The witness (a prototypical outsider/guest) "is not only the recipient of hospitality, but the recipient of the ongoing narration of past events of hospitality" (2001, 48). One act of hospitality often provides the context for the recollection of previous acts of hospitality. In Kalymnos it is through this repeated narrative about food generosity that one's reputation is built and affirmed, and an honorable identity created.

The ex-Rhodesian community elaborates its idea of Rhodesianness through a nostalgic narrative of past, which has at its nucleus a caring generosity. Hospitality, linked to friendly, kind conduct, is considered as perhaps the most Rhodesian aspect of a person's moral character, in addition to which it is seen as something that defines the ex-Rhodesian social group as a moral community. In a survey on Rhodesians in diaspora conducted in 1995 (Eaton 1996; see also Cheater 1999), the respondents' answers, regarding the values, attitudes and behavior patterns most missed from the homeland and consciously retained in personal behavior, were categorized in five clusters:

- a) Friendliness (mentioned in 58 % of responses), linked also to hospitality and kind, caring, helpful, social, or community oriented behavior (another 10 %)
- b) Honesty, openness, integrity, fairness, ethics and morality (19 %)
- c) Independence or freedom of thought and action (6 %)
- d) Respect for others, self-discipline and self-improvement (5 %)
- e) Pride in behaving properly and doing things well (3 %)

(Of these a, d, and e were more often associated with African than contemporary Western societies.)

Hospitality in the ex-Rhodesian context is understood as conduct, which is caring and helpful towards the community to which one belongs, and especially towards visitors and newcomers to the community. However, unlike in the Kalymnos, hospitality is not so much about personal reputation, or about individual good name. Rather, people consciously attempt to cultivate these traits in their conduct in order to give *Rhodesians* a good name, and in order to see themselves as part of the community of proper Rhodesians. Hospitality is expressed in numerous caring acts, which are meant to make the recipient feel comfortable and at home. Like in many

other societies, hospitality is perhaps best expressed in food generosity. How then does this consciously and actively upheld moral behavior accord with the practice of *bringing* in the *braai*? How does the praised Rhodesian virtue of hospitality figure in this form of eating together? If food generosity is a key feature of hospitality and if the sharing of food is quintessential in feasts of communal solidarity, what can we make of the *braai*, which brings people together to consume their own food?

The *bring and braai* was sometimes fiercely and openly criticized because of this very aspect of *bringing* in the *braai*. It was thought to disparage the cherished characteristic hospitality of Rhodesians. Kevin felt strongly about this, emphasizing the difference between social life in Rhodesia and in South Africa:

And no *bring and braai* [in Rhodesia]! No such thing as little baskets and little things. You don't bring anything. When I first came to South Africa; they had that BYO [on an invitation to a party], Bring Your Own. Now, I thought that, that's an abbreviation for Bulawayo; BYO. So when I first came to a party in South Africa and they said BYO, I pitched up and I said: "Well, where are all the Bulawayo people?" You see. And they said: "No, Bring Your Own!" I quickly jumped into my car and went down to the bloody Spar and bought a *braai* pack and a carry pack of beers and brought them in quickly. I didn't know what this BYO is. Well basically, as I said, BYS, Bring Yourself, is what happened there. (Kevin)

Nico too subscribes to Kevin's sense of embarrassment and bewilderment about the demoralized concept of hospitality in the new country. He compares Rhodesia and South Africa, emphasizing the easy sociability and reciprocal generosity as they were known in Rhodesia:

Every Sunday without a doubt, at 6 o'clock, everyone came to my house. Curry night at Nico's. Every Saturday night at 6 o'clock, without a doubt we used to go to Alan's house. It was his roast night. You know there, if you wanna visit Katja, you don't phone and say: "Katja, are you available? When can we come visit you?" There you just knock on, you don't actually knock on the door, you just walk in the house. You know it is different. Here you can't. Here you've gotta, you wanna visit somebody; you have to phone and make an appointment.

The biggest thing that hit me when I came to this country was that we met some people, Harry and Laura. They were the first people we met in Maritzburg. Then we were invited to a *braai* at their house on one Sunday. Anyway it was a *braai* and there were about 15, 20 people (...) So I said: "Where's the beers?" "Oh, didn't you bring? Oh, well, have some of my beers. Cool."

Half an hour later, I see everyone's cooking meat. I'm gonna take some and Harry noticed and he says: "Didn't you bring meat?" I says: "No Harry, you invited me, I don't bring!" He says: "No, no, here's *bring and braai*." And I said: "You know what, we'd better be going."

And I was so embarrassed and I embarrassed him too. Because there in Rhodesia, if I invite you girl, you don't bring. You don't. If you wanna bring a bottle of wine for the house because of the goodness of your heart, you're more than welcome to, or whatever. But if I say to you, you come into my house, we're having a *braai* tonight, you bring nothing. Meat I supply, the salad, the fruit (...). And even in home today, we're still like that. And people that got to know me now, you invite me, I don't bring. And I tell my friends, if you're gonna invite me, I've told everyone else this story about Harry and Laura. If you invite me make sure you don't expect me to bring. I will bring, but don't make it like, if I'm not gonna bring, I'm not gonna get anything to drink or eat. And the same with my friends. When I invite my friends to my house, trust me, they don't bring nothing. (Nico)

In Kevin's and Nico's accounts, the *bring and braai* distorts the image of Rhodesian hospitality. As a social form, it is always inferior to how a true Rhodesian festive meal should be arranged according to correct codes of hospitality and generosity. These narratives reveal that according to proper Rhodesian moral conduct the host should supply the venue, the food and the drinks. The invitation can then be expected to be reciprocated in the near future, in Nico's recollection, on a regular, repetitive basis. Nico also explains that one can always help the host in generosity by bringing, for example, a bottle of wine "to the house." Such a bottle of wine is a gift for the hosting household to distribute as and whenever they please. It is not meant for the donor's own consumption. Moreover, there is an assertion that this act of aiding the host's hospitality has to be performed "out of the goodness of your heart," hence, unselfishly and genuinely, out of pure generosity.³² Both Kevin's and Nico's narratives construct a moral opposition between us then and us now. In such talk the past invariably overwhelms the now. Often in similar ex-Rhodesian self analysis, the *bring and braai* is deemed as a South African practice adopted by Rhodesians while in exile. Here the South Africanness signifies lesser sociability, lesser hospitality and greater stinginess.

³² Nico's presentation of Rhodesian exchange of hospitality is a clear example of Marcel Mauss's (1990) assertion that although the exchange of gifts is theoretically voluntary – and thus appears as disinterested and unselfish – it is in fact reciprocally obligatory and interested.

Nico's and Kevin's recollections also indicate the dissimilarity of individual memories or the discordance of emphasis put on different memories. In some reminiscences the *bring and braai* social form does not seem so very different from the communal gatherings in Rhodesia. Consider the following anecdote:

As a teenager in the 1970's I went to a couple of 'Independence' parties. [Celebrated on the 11th of November, the day when UDI was declared in 1965.] One was at a local Whites-only municipal swimming pool (...) The Black staff had to work hard during those parties. Huge 'braais' made from 44 gallon drums cut in half would cook the abundance of food for the 'braai packs' you bought for 25 cents. I remember them clearly. You had one 'Colcom' pork sausage, one 'boerwors' of similar length, a chicken leg and a pork chop. At the erected tent 'bars' you could get a Coke for 5 cents and the adults drank hundreds of beers chilled in huge vats of melting ice ("Ex-pat in United Kingdom," November 10, 2005, The Bush Telegraph).

Thus, what Kevin and Nico do not remember or choose not to emphasize is the fact that braai-pack-social-events occurred in Rhodesia as well. Hence, whereas the *bring and braai* may for some appear as a tragic loss and drastic change of culturally proper ways of sharing food, for others this way of sharing a communal meal may be directly reminiscent of festive meals in Rhodesia. There is therefore variance in the community in the ways in which the frames of familiarity and intimacy embracing events of eating together are interpreted. In the diaspora, the bring- or buy-your-own form has become the dominant arrangement of social eating, replacing quite expansively the reciprocal exchange of private parties.

To return to the concept of hospitality, a very strong idea of reciprocal, controlled equity underlines the hospitality and generosity as they were expressed and experienced in Rhodesia. Hospitality rested on the fact that in due course of time, the generosity one has shown would be reciprocated. In a pioneer society that was the code of conduct. One could rely on being fed and accommodated by fellow whites during arduous travels. It was important to feel that one was safe and "at home" on the road as well. After the pioneer era, this kind of conduct was cherished and nurtured in colonial Rhodesia. The following reminiscence of road sociability is an example of a nostalgic hospitality narrative, which most often features the narrator as the *recipient* of hospitality.

Road courtesy was at its best in Rhodesia. On an occasion when I had travelled solo to Johannesburg and was on my way back (roughly 400 miles to Beit Bridge and another 400 to Salisbury) I wondered why a car travelling behind me did not pass as it could quite obviously have done so (...) After about 50 miles the driver suddenly speeded up and as he drew alongside me

(...) his wife held out a thermos flask and a cup, indicating a stop for refreshment. They had noticed that I was alone and felt that I must be getting tired (Spurling 1994, 6).

The pioneer society was a very mobile society, and so too was colonial Rhodesia. People, particularly those working for the railways or the army, moved regularly. Thus, colonial white Rhodesia stuck to the moral codes of reciprocal generosity in helping newcomers and travelers to feel at home. People took great pride in how newcomers were welcomed to the community.³³ Walt, who had come to Rhodesia during the Second World War and then started to work for the railways, repeatedly emphasized the easy sociability:

In Rhodesia it [giving and receiving invitations] was airy fairy. You didn't wait to be introduced, you, if you moved to a new station, the people round about, one would send you lunch, another one would send you a pot of tea, the other one would come around and say: "Hello, you're coming to us for whatever tonight." You were friends there immediately. (Walt)

The colonial society relied on white reciprocity, on very quick socialization and friendship. Mobility within the colony's borders was not threatening to the social order; instead, this mobility was foreseeable and expressed continuity and stability. Regular moving from one mining town, army base or railway station to the next was movement within one's own community and movement between known places. Moreover; such movement built on an optimistic faith in up-ward mobility. Rhodesian idea of hospitality was based on making and maintaining connections among the small and sparse white population. It was linked to the cultural value placed on open house; making others feel at home, and feeling at home in which ever remote corner of Rhodesia one might find oneself.

Vincent and Claudia often reminisced about the time when they had just immigrated to South Africa and had not been treated with the same welcoming generosity that was customary in Rhodesia:

³³ I and my family received similar hospitality on our arrival to South Africa. We did not live with my "host family" but as I have mentioned in the Introduction, they were overwhelmingly generous in making us as comfortable as possible. They furnished our temporary home with pots and pans and linens; they brought us food and toys; via their own social relationships they organized essential services for us, such as a car dealer, day-care for our daughter, medical care and so forth. Before we had our own car, they, and other people as well, drove us around daily. In other words, they did everything possible in order to ease our settling in, to make us feel at home.

Vincent: They [South Africans] didn't seem to be as caring as Rhodesians were. That used to irritate me because anybody new coming to Bulawayo, we used to look after them so well. You know, you'd go out of your way.

Claudia: And the Bulawayo people seem to be better than the Salisbury people, or we like to think that.

Vincent: In Harare they have more people who came out on contracts and perhaps weren't permanent. But Bulawayo, there weren't all the government people and ambassadorial people and so on. So people who came to Bulawayo were people who were to stay. And probably that was what made the difference. (Vincent and Claudia)

The comparison Vincent makes between Harare and Bulawayo is telling. The temporariness of Harare people is qualitatively different from the temporariness in Walt's railway experience. The Bulawayo people "were to stay," just like the railway people. Thus, in due course of time they would reciprocate the hospitality that they had encountered. Perhaps their hospitality would not be shown directly to the donor as such, but in a circulating fashion it would be given to the next newcomers in the community. Thus, showing hospitality is an act that builds enduring and continuing social networks of relationships. This, in my mind, is the key point in understanding the reciprocity of generosity in the Rhodesian community. The act of hospitality (the gift) is socially oriented, it is meant to build the honorable identity of Rhodesians as a community. The hospitality does not need to be returned to the donor by the recipient, but rather, hospitality is meant to be circulated within the community. This reliance on the circulation of hospitality was the moral glue of the community.

The mobility of the contemporary ex-Rhodesian society is qualitatively different from the colonial Rhodesian society. The diaspora society's mobility comprehends insecurity and uncertainty about the endurance of one's own place of dwelling, about one's social and economic standing, and about the directions the surrounding society is moving to. There is also far less reliance on the continuity of social relationships, and hence far less reliance on the continuity of the circulation of hospitality. Most people in the ex-Rhodesian community are elderly, and therefore there is also a haunting thought at the back of one's mind that any social mobility the individuals are likely to encounter will be downward. Such being the case, people want to avoid being indebted to one another; they do not want to risk not being able to reciprocate in proper ways. Thus, the *braai* as a social food event has gone through a subtle change to accommodate to the present circumstances. A *bring and braai* may be considered as a form of a social meal in which it is possible to avoid reciprocal indebtedness and to save one's face. Norman and Suzy, for example, felt quite uneasy

about social events. When I asked whether they attended the Rhodesian association functions, Norman said:

If we can. If it suits. We don't like going to somebody's house. We're gonna have it in the bush where we are all on equal footing. But to go and sit at somebody's house. I'm uncomfortable with that. To go and sit at somebody's house is not our scene. (Norman)

As I have explained, the form of social eating in the *bring and braai* is such that every family, or a group of people who have come to the function together and fit into one car, brings their own food and drink that they will consume. Thus, the obligations and indebtedness connected to giving food apply to one's household or one's immediate social group only. In "the bush," everyone is thus responsible for oneself and in a culturally agreed-upon way momentarily "on equal footing." Moreover, *braai* is a kind of meal in which the elaboration of dishes is fairly minimal and the social distinctions relatively inconspicuous. As a social food event, the *bring and braai* then conceals the fact that not everyone would have the means to return invitations and offer an equally elaborate meal. The sharing of food clearly marks and makes the people who share the same social occasion into multiple distinctive groups. This arrangement enables people to participate in a festive meal in a way that they are able to maintain an honorable identity. The *braai*-pack individuals sharing the event and eating their individual yet similar meals side by side are close enough to make and maintain proper sociality, nevertheless through their eating practice distant enough to avoid the obligations of reciprocal hospitality.

Although *bring and braai* compromises hospitality, and although the participants do not share the food they eat as such, the participants are still bound together through the repetitive act of simultaneous consumption: they share the act of the meal by eating together, side by side. They share the moment and the place and they share the ability to remember together. John Forrest (1988, 228, cit. Sutton 2001, 49) expresses this to the point:

Each mouthful a person eats is the same as the next mouthful, the same as each mouthful for other people at the table, the same as mouthfuls eaten in previous years, and so on. A sensual subjective link is created between all those present at the meal and between all those who took part in similar meals in earlier years.

Thus, no *braai* is an exact copy of any previous one, but it is *similar enough* to recall other like events. And despite obvious geographic differences, the *braais* are similar enough to tie together with contemporaneous Rhodesian food events in distant places. The *braais* are similar enough, because the key structural elements that distinguish the *braais* from other social food events remain unaltered from one event to the next. It is the repetition of

the key features that enables one *braai* to recall the memory of others, tying them in a continuum, and thereby tying the consumers and participants to a continuum as well. These features are repeated in action but also rhetorically circulated in the worldwide Rhodesian media. Scant mentions of a few parts and pieces manage to bring to memory the wholeness of a past home.

In spite of the reconciliated generosity, the *bring and braai* is a shared event that builds a deep sense of togetherness in the participants. It is an equalizer, an expression of solidarity and of social sameness. As a form of a festive meal, it is a tactful leveler of obvious differences in economic resources, which are wiped out of sight. In that sense *bring and braai* stresses key values marked as distinctly Rhodesian, namely, friendship, solidarity and the lack of hierarchy. Through discretely accentuating these components of Rhodesian kind and caring conduct, the changed ways of eating together can still be commemorated as distinctly Rhodesian.

3. RE-ENACTMENT OF A HISTORICAL EVENT – COMMEMORATING COMMUNITY

Rhodesianaland



Picture 6: "Welcome to Rhodesianaland"

In September 1990 more than a thousand ex-Rhodesians gathered together to commemorate the centenary of the arrival of the Pioneer Column at Fort Salisbury and the founding of Rhodesia. A temporary pilgrimage site was constructed at a recreational resort, Tshipise, in the Limpopo Province (then Northern Transvaal) in South Africa near the Zimbabwean border. The organizers aimed at "recreating a little bit of Rhodesia in South Africa" (Duff 1998b, 17), and the site was re-named *Rhodesianaland*, an imaginary land of commemoration. The impressive thatched canopy roofed entrance to the resort became a "border post." There was a large "Welcome to Rhodesianaland" sign at the entrance, and the green and white Rhodesian flag waved alongside with the South African one to welcome the visitors. On arrival, the "residents" passed through "Immigration and Customs," where they received a Rhodesianaland passport, with visas entitling the "citizens" to participate in the many events during the week of celebration. The roads and walkways of the resort were renamed with Rhodesian place names: Jameson Avenue, Pioneer Street, Lobengula Way and Cecil Square. True to the idea of a nation, a newspaper, *Rhodesianaland Herald*, was also published and delivered early each morning (Morgan 1991, 16; The Settler 1991, 23).

Since the centenary could not be publicly commemorated in Zimbabwe, the site of the ceremonies was chosen to be geographically as close as possible to the border in order to facilitate the participation of white Zimbabweans. In addition, the familiarity of the borderland scenery enhanced the sense of being “at home” and bound the dreamed up, whimsical Rhodesianaland to the remembered landscape of Rhodesia: “The scenery of mapani scrub³⁴ and rocky hills studded with baobab trees is familiar to so many Rhodesians,” writes one observer (Morgan 1991, 16). Marjorie, who together with her husband Stuart and Graham and Susan drove from Pietermaritzburg to Tshipise (1150 km in 14 ½ hours), writes about the landscape of the location in her diary:

We were now into country that reminded us – with great nostalgia – of the Rhodesian countryside – with Mopani trees in their winter colours, hornbills and monkeys (...) The journey through the Soutpansberg Mountains, was one of picking out familiar landmarks and it was great to see the Baobab trees again (Marjorie’s diary, September 8, 1990³⁵).

All through the week there were tours organized for the residents; there were game drives, a trip to the Messina copper mines and a “mystery tour to unusual places.” In addition, the resort facilities included a hot spring pool and mineral baths as its main attraction, bowling greens, tennis courts, mini-golf, trampoline, horse riding, snooker, golf, hiking, and game viewing (Flame Lily Centenary 1990, 2-3). There was also a grocery store and a little shop selling Rhodesian memorabilia. People gathered together around the pool with their drinks during day-time and around *braai*-fires at night to meet up with old acquaintances. The primary activities of the week were, however, the various commemorative events. On the first evening (Saturday, 8th of September), there was a *Pioneer Laager* at which a hunter’s stew (venison and vegetables) and *sadza* with cold draught beer were served. The area of the *laager* had been divided into Rhodesian provinces (Mashonaland, Matabeleland, Midlands etc.) in order to facilitate meeting up with old friends from one’s home area. On Sunday morning there was a service of dedication in the chapel. The service was held (unintentionally) pioneer-style, since neither the organist nor the preacher had arrived. The national secretary of RASA delivered the sermon:

[W]e need to take from the past those values which distinguished us as Rhodesians, and live by them now and in

³⁴ *Colophospermum mopane* grows in hot, dry and low-lying areas in the far northern parts of South Africa and in Zimbabwe and the neighbouring countries (Aubrey 2004).

³⁵ Both Marjorie and Susan kept diaries during the week of celebrations at Tshipise. Susan had also saved all Rhodesianaland Herald newspapers and other associated papers.

the uncertain future – every bit as uncertain as our forebears faced in 1890. What are these values – well, pride of heritage, loyalty, dedication, hard work, perseverance – and a sense of humour. Those are of lasting value and in the words of our text let us be encouraged to “stand fast...and hold the traditions” (2 Thess 2:15) (Rhodesialand Herald September 10, 1990, 4).

Wednesday, the 12th of September was the centenary date of the arrival of the Pioneer Column at Fort Salisbury. The date was commemorated with a Victorian Dinner, with former Rhodesian Prime Minister Ian Smith and his wife Janet – who drove to the location from their home in Zimbabwe – as guests of honor. People had gathered to wait for the guests at the entrance hours before their arrival.

Janet and Ian Smith eventually arrived just before five and what a reception they got! By this time M-Net [South African commercial TV-channel] were on the job (...) Women rushed up and put their arms around him – it was all a bit embarrassing actually (Susan's diary, September 12, 1990).

The Victorian Dinner was held that evening. Susan and Graham had been asked to sit at the main table and Marjorie and Stuart at the second top table representing the RASA organization. The two couples were elegantly costumed in proper period apparel. Marjorie was clad in a dress with a high lacy collar and deep flounces on the back. She had also added hair pieces of ringlets to her coiffure. Susan was wearing a Victorian-style dress, which Marjorie referred to as the “Dickens’ Singers Dress.” Graham, according to Marjorie's description, looked “all resplendent in a waistcoat and top hat.” Stuart, who was to play one of the main character's in the flag-raising ceremony, was planning to wear the costume tailored as a replica of the original uniform. The khaki jacket unfortunately was far too small, and he ended up wearing the uniform trousers with a white shirt and a bow tie.

All the items on the Centenary menu had been given names significant to the path of the Pioneer Column. There was avocado and tuna Fort Tuli as a starter, followed by roast beef Wagon trail, Yorkshire pudding Kimberley, roast potatoes Providential Pass, cauliflower Fort Victoria, carrots Fort Charter, peas Fort Salisbury, and finally, apple tart Mount Hampden. (Sadly, Susan noted, the meal itself was “nothing to write home about.”) Ian Smith gave a speech in which he encouraged RASA to keep up their work in trying to stimulate the wonderful spirit of Rhodesians and to preserve Rhodesian past culture, history and traditions (Rhodesianaland-video, 1991³⁶). Smith continued: “Some people are critical of *When-wes*.

³⁶ A South African commercial TV channel M-Net made a documentary about the week of commemoration at Thsipise. Subsequently a 90 minute film “Rhodesianaland” was produced from the material. It was released on January 25 1991 (The Settler March/April 1991, 30). The film is produced by Mark

There's nothing wrong at being a *When-we*, ladies and gentlemen (...) Let us be proud of our history. We have nothing to hide. We're entitled to be proud of our history and traditions."

The following day, the 13th of September, was the anniversary of the day the Pioneer Column raised the Union Jack at Fort Salisbury. The ceremony was "reproduced" as carefully as possible following the many existing historical accounts about the raising of the flag in 1890. I will discuss this culmination of the Centenary celebrations in more detail below.

Friday morning, Susan and Graham and Marjorie and Stuart took part in the "mystery tour." During the journey the group visited the 116 Bataillon of the South African army. Amongst the Bataillon were African soldiers formerly from Rhodesian African Rifles.³⁷ The Bataillon performed the RAR regimental song – *Sweet Banana* – which had become very well known during the "Bush War." "This was too much for some of the members of our party and tears poured down their faces unashamedly" (Susan, September 14, 1990).³⁸ The next stop on the mystery tour was for lunch:

All the roads we were now travelling on were red dust roads and bus by this stage was covered in a thin film of red dust. Made the farmers amongst us feel very much at home! We stopped at an 'oasis' in amongst all the dust with a large stretch of green lawn and a large baobab tree nicknamed the Elephant's Trunk. Here tables had been spread with white cloths and braais set ready and we were served boerewors rolls – delicious. There was an enormous cool box full of cold beer and cold drink – by this time this went down without touching sides, as you can imagine. After everyone had eaten and drunk their fill some bright spark suggested we see how many men it took to span the baobab tree and compare it with the one at Victoria Falls.

Williams for RASA and written by Yvonne Duff. It covers, among other things, the arrival of the Smiths, the Victorian dinner, the hoisting of the flag, John Edmond concert, and the final church service. It also includes several interviews of the participants.

³⁷ RAR was the African (white-officered) battalion in the Rhodesian armed forces, which during the war for independence fought against the ZANLA and ZIPRA guerrilla forces.

³⁸ *Sweet Banana* is one of the songs the hearing of which today seemed to arouse strong sentiments and evoke vivid memories. One former Rhodesian in Western Australia writes: "I have the Rhodesian centenary album which has *Sweet Banana* on it sung by the RAR. Every time that I hear this song I remember seeing the RAR singing it on the TV. The smart African soldiers standing tall and singing Rhodesia's praise with strong and melodious harmony that only Africans can achieve. It always brings a tear to my eye as I feel the stirrings of National Pride and purpose for existence" (Gregory 1996).

It took only 17 men whereas the one at Vic Falls takes 32 men (Susan, September 14, 1990).

On Friday evening there was an ox-spit braai. The fires had been lit at 11 o'clock the previous evening, and the meat put in at 3 a.m. The meat had cooked slowly all day. 500 people joined this event. According to Marjorie "the melt-in-your-mouth beef was indeed worth the long wait." On Saturday the participants attempted to make it into the Guinness Book of Records by creating a record of people per square meter in a swimming pool.

All this took place amidst much laughter and camaraderie – in fact the whole week had been like that. Everyone felt as if they belonged to this 'great big happy family'. It wasn't necessary to be introduced, we were and still are all Rhodesians. I find it very difficult to find words to express the feeling, the atmosphere etc. It was a once in a lifetime experience, which I, for one, will treasure always (Susan, September 15, 1990).

That evening John Edmond, a famous Rhodesian entertainer and troopie singer, held a concert. Performed under stars, the familiar songs echoed in the balmy spring night. "John and his son appeared on stage wearing the once-familiar camouflage uniforms, and soon had the audience completely enthralled and involved" (Marjorie, September 15, 1990). "When he sang "Rhodesians Never Die"³⁹ everyone, as one body, rose to their feet and sang along with him" (Susan, September 15, 1990).

Here's the story of Rhodesia – a land both fair and great.

On the 11th of November, an independent state.

This was much against the wishes of certain governments,
Whose leaders tried to break us down and make us all repent.

But

|: We're born Rhodesians and we'll fight through thick and thin,
We'll keep our land a free land, stop the enemy coming in.
We'll keep them north of the Zambezi 'till that river's running dry
And this mighty land will prosper, for Rhodesians never die:|

They can send their men to murder and they can shout their words
of hate.

But the cost of keeping this land free can never be too great.

For our men and boys are fighting for the things that they hold dear.
And this land and all its people will never disappear.

[Chorus]

³⁹ "Rhodesians Never Die" is a very well-known song by Clem Tholet, Ian Smith's son-in-law, which during the 1970's achieved the status of an unofficial national anthem (Godwin and Hancock 1999, 14). (C. Tholet and A. Dillon: 'Rhodesians Never Die'. Third Ear Music. In Edmond 1990: *Rhodesian Centenary Album 1890-1990*.)

We'll preserve this little nation for our children's children too.
 Once you're a Rhodesian, no other land will do.
 We will stand tall in the sunshine with the truth upon our side.
 And if we have to go alone, we'll go alone with pride.
 [Chorus]

The final event on Sunday morning was a service of Thanksgiving in the chapel. The service was quite intense. "I cannot *but* remember," said the Reverend Bill Dodgen, who had been an army chaplain in Rhodesia, as he spoke of a young soldier, who had been hit by a land mine, and to whose parents he had to deliver the message of his death (Rhodesianaland-video, 1991). "It seemed to bring the futility of war into even clearer focus, and we prayed that our new country's problems can be solved without it" (Marjorie, September 16, 1990).

[T]here were not many dry eyes that left the church that morning. Those that were just lumps when they came out of the church soon turned to tears as everyone then bid farewell to friends old and new. We left Tshipise (...) full of warmth not caused by the sun but by the feeling of friendship, secure in the knowledge that Rhodesia will never be forgotten (Susan, September 16, 1990).

The flag raising ceremony

On the 12th of September 1890, the 180 men of the Pioneer Column arrived at their final destination in Mashonaland, "a barren piece of ground on the open high-veld adjacent to a prominent hill and flowing river" (Leach 1989, 18). It had taken more than two months for the Pioneer Column to cover the stretch of 400 miles from Fort Tuli in the Northern Bechuanaland. The wagons laagered to form a square for the last time, as ordered by the Column Commander Lt.-Col. Edward Pennefather. A parade ground was prepared and a rough flag-pole cut from a *msasa* tree. At 10 a.m. the following day, the 13th of September, the Column paraded in full dress. The Union Jack was raised by Lt. Tyndale-Biscoe and "in the name of Queen Victoria possession was taken of Mashonaland and all other unpossessed land (...) in South-Central Africa that should be found desirable" (ibid.). Prayer was offered by the Rev. Canon Balfour, Police Chaplain, the bugles sounded the "Royal Salute" and a 21-gun salute was fired by the seven-pounders of the Artillery Troop. The Colonel called for three-cheers for Queen Victoria – "another territory had been added to the British Empire" (Leach 1990). The fort was named Salisbury, in honor of Robert Gascoyne-Cecil, the 3rd Marquess of Salisbury, then Prime Minister of Great Britain; the laager was called Cecil Square, after Cecil John Rhodes; and the newly founded country was soon after referred to as Rhodesia.

In an early record of the founding of the colony the Pioneer Column's achievement is described as follows:

[A]lmost exactly five months [had passed] from the time of the column leaving Cape Town, and less than four months from the date of its quitting Mafeking. During this time a journey through a difficult and almost unknown country for 800 miles or so had been performed; a practicable road had been laid out for half this distance, and three forts erected for the protection of those who should follow; while for nearly the whole way the column had been harassed by the fear of attack from a bloodthirsty savage foe who was hovering around them in overwhelming numbers, and who, moreover, had the advantage of knowing the country thoroughly. This march of the Mashonaland Pioneers was a monument to British pluck and tenacity of purpose, and the annals of Britain's colonial history, replete as they are with brilliant feats, can show nothing finer than this (Hensman 2005 [1900]).

Exactly 100 years after the first flag-raising ceremony, the event was re-enacted, and "a piece of Transvaal bushveld, dry and dusty in the September sunshine evoked for many the conditions in which our pioneer forefathers traveled to reach Fort Salisbury" (Morgan 1991, 16). Although many participants were unhappy that the commemoration could not be held at the factual site where the flag was originally hoisted, today in the very center of Harare, the landscape at Tshipise – with an adjacent kopje, thorn bushes and the yellow-white grass of the veld bending in the sharp, fresh wind – emphasized the feel of authenticity of the event. The flag-raising tableau, based on careful research of historical accounts, was as faithful to the original event as possible. The event was scheduled to begin precisely 100 years to the minute after the original ceremony. The key figures who took part in the original ceremony were represented by men dressed up in period uniforms especially made for the occasion. Hal Pennefather played the role of his great uncle Lt.-Col. Edward Pennefather, the Column commander. Other main characters were Sir John Willoughby, the Second in Command of the Column; Sidney Shepstone, the Aide-de-camp; Lt. Tyndale-Biscoe, who hoisted the flag; Canon Balfour, the police chaplain; and Corporal Bugler Chase, who sounded the royal salute.

The spectators, some of whom were also dressed in Victorian costumes, were in the part of the parade and as such "participating in this historic moment" (Rhodesianland Herald September 12, 1990, 2). Led by the Column commander, the men strode through the dry white grass – Sir John Willoughby was on horseback – and took their positions in front of the flagstaff made of a *mopane* tree (because, unfortunately, the *msasas* do not grow south of the Limpopo River). The flagstaff was supported by signal halyards as described in various historical documents. The Chaplain addressed the spectators and offered a prayer:

Here we stand on new soil, in a new country, with new hopes, new opportunities and new challenges. The past we know from our experiences, good or bad, but that's history. The present, the here and now, is but like an infant (...) Today is the first day of the rest of our lives. The future is in God's hands. May the light of God's wisdom endure us with courage, to give us this land to possess it and to give it our best even as we gave our homelands our best.

After the prayer, the bugler sounded the Royal Salute, during which the flag was slowly raised by Lt. Tyndale-Biscoe. As the last notes echoed from the near-by kopje, the 21-gun salute was fired to signify the birth of a new country akin to the birth of a Royal Prince. [In actual fact, instead of a gun salute, the South African Army had set up 21 explosive charges, "which went off together by sympathetic detonation after the third or fourth explosion" (Duff 1998b, 17).] The gun-salute "echoed off the nearby kopje, just as the sound 100 years ago would have echoed off nearby Salisbury Kopje" (Morgan 1991, 16). The spectators then joined together in three cheers for Her Majesty, Queen Victoria, and were so "caught up in the historical significance of the moment, they spontaneously rose to their feet" (ibid.). After the ceremony was over, the spectators gathered at an area renamed Cecil Square to watch a game of tennis played in Victorian costumes and to enjoy tea and cucumber sandwiches on the lawn.

This re-enactment in South Africa was not only a reproduction of the "original event"; it was also a celebration of the continuity of a key commemorative ritual. The flag-raising ceremony – although in a simpler form – used to be performed annually in Rhodesia. Each 12th of September, the first hoisting of the flag was re-enacted at the very site where the original flag-raising had taken place. And each year the raising of the Union Jack was performed by a direct descendant of the original Pioneers.⁴⁰ "Sadly," John Leach (1989, 18) writes, "this tradition is not acceptable to the new State [of Zimbabwe]. Instead a wreath is quietly laid each year in the cloisters of Salisbury cathedral." While the centenary celebrations were in full swing south of the Limpopo, Zimbabwe's then 80 000 strong white population was more subdued. According to a Zimbabwean newspaper, *The Citizen*, there was no celebrating in Harare. "Asked if there were any

⁴⁰ This doctrine of direct descendants is observed whenever possible. The centenary was celebrated in numerous ex-Rhodesian communities world-over, and the flag-hoisting ceremony was re-enacted, for example, on the Garden Route in South Africa, where about 125 Rhodesians had gathered. "We are very fortunate to have living in George, Cynthia Plowman, granddaughter of Reginald Bray who was part of the BSAP contingent at the original ceremony in 1890. Cynthia raised the flag for us on Sunday 16th September 1990. Her father was a Pioneer in his own right, and raised the flag in Cecil Square in 1976" (Humphries 1991, 20).

ceremonies planned for the 100th anniversary, a spokeswoman for the city said: 'What do you mean? You want us to celebrate colonialism?'" (The Citizen, September 13, 1990, cit. Rhodesianland Herald, September 14, 1990). The South African Sunday Times reporter in Harare, however, notes that the Zimbabwean whites did pay their tributes, although their commemoration was a display of "phantom flower power" in which bunches of flowers kept mysteriously appearing at the Pioneer flagstaff in Harare's Africa Unity Square (formerly Cecil Square),⁴¹ the site of the original raising of the Union Jack by the Pioneer Column in 1890 (Sunday Times, September 16, 1990).

Remembering Together

Commemoration as mnemonic practice

By organizing the Centenary celebrations, RASA wanted to give "ordinary people the opportunity to look back with gratitude and pride at the events set in motion by that first simple flag-raising" (Duff 1998b, 17). The very objective of the event was therefore to create a ceremonial space and a period in and during which people would have a chance to come together in order to remember together where they come from and who they are. Rhodesianland was an explicit site of remembering – an arena for commemoration. What characterizes commemoration as a mnemonic practice is the ceremonial call to remembrance the concept connotes. This implies a hovering consciousness of fear of forgetting; we remember together in order not to forget. There is a risk that "we" is lost when stories of "us" are no longer told.

In a classical work on collective memory Maurice Halbwachs makes a distinction between autobiographical memory and historical memory. The first is a memory of events which we have personally experienced in the past. The latter, on the other hand, may not be reached directly by the social actor but needs to be stimulated indirectly through "reading or listening or in commemoration and festive occasions when people gather together to remember in common the deeds and accomplishments of long-departed members of the group" (Coser 1992, 24, Introduction in Halbwachs 1992). Commemorative occasions such as the Centenary may be seen as specific ritual events and pivotal mnemonic practices through which social memory is generated. From this perspective memory may be considered as a set of remembering practices contextualized and formed in culturally specific frameworks. The process of remembering, as I understand it, is essentially social; the workings of individual minds are not only socially communicated and exchanged, but they are formed and pieced together

⁴¹ Cecil Square was renamed Africa Unity Square in May 1988 to mark the 25th anniversary of the founding of the Organisation African Unity (The Citizen, September 13, 1990, ref. Rhodesianland Herald, September 14, 1990).

by social arrangements. This brings us, again, back to Maurice Halbwachs (1992, 38), who stresses the social composition of memory. Halbwachs asserts that in remembering we are prompted by others; we appeal to our memory in order to answer questions others ask us, or questions that they might have asked us:

Most of the time, when I remember, it is others who spur me on; their memory comes to the aid of mine and mine relies on theirs. [The memories] are recalled to me externally, and the groups of which I am part at any time give me the means to reconstruct them (...) It is in this sense that there exists a collective memory and social frameworks for memory; It is to the degree that our individual thought places itself in these frameworks and participates in this memory that it is capable of the act of recollection (1992, 38).

Halbwachs has sometimes been criticized for the perceived lack of distinction he makes between individual and social “since [in his account] autobiographical memory is also the product of social contact” (Bloch 1998, 117).⁴² But, emphasizing the social production of memory does not mean that a community shares some kind of a “collective mind.” Paul Connerton elucidates the idea about the social foundation of memory and of the relationship of individual experience with social order in a clarifying way. Every recollection, Connerton writes, albeit of events that we have witnessed alone, or of sentiments and thoughts that have not been expressed, are attached to an ensemble of notions that are not ours alone, but shared by many others. These notions about persons, places, dates, words or forms of language concern the whole material and moral life of the societies to which we belong or have belonged (1989, 36).

What we are dealing with here forms a very basic question of symbolic consciousness, namely the incorporation of percept with concept. According to Marshall Sahlins: “From the first moment, experience undergoes a kind of structural co-optation: the incorporation of the percept with a concept of which the perceiver is not the author (...) Perception is instantaneously a *re-cognition*, a matching of the percept with some received social category” (2000b, 281-282). But *re-cognition* and matching never signify straight-forward reproduction. A sign is substantialized in action by

⁴² Maurice Bloch also criticizes Halbwachs for his rejection of psychological accounts of memory and for not paying any attention to the functioning of individual brain in creating and storing memories, for according to Halbwachs: “There is no point in seeking where [memories] are preserved in my brain or in some nook of my mind to which I alone have access: for they are recalled by me externally, and the groups of which I am part at any time give me the means to reconstruct them” (1992, 38). Other critiques of Halbwachs have seen his argumentation as presentist, reducing “memory to an artifact of the here and now, as if it were merely a backwards construction after the fact” (Werbner 1998a; see also Cole 1998; 2001).

reference to the lived world. Significantly, every such occasion is unique. There is always a chance that in action signs are set in new relationships with each other whereby the structure is transformed. Thus, Sahlins says: "The deployment of received cultural understandings to specific worldly contexts always harbors the possibility that things will never again be the same. The world is under no obligation to correspond to the categories by which it is thought" (2000b, 290). This is the relationship of individual perception or experience to a set of symbolic categories, the relationships of which form the cultural order. By this token, individual actions in and experiences of the past are particular and differ from one another. Yet there exists a meaningful order in the differences (Sahlins 2000a, 488). Hence, individual memories are from the first moment incorporated with notions or symbolic categories that are shared by others, and thus, by definition, social.

During the Centenary there was a strong conviction among the participants that they share a common past to which similar memories are attached in spite of the fact that the people did not necessarily know each other personally. This sense of shared experience in the past, according to Benedict Anderson (1991), is a significant aspect of a sense of national identity. The conviction that a community shares experiences in the past creates an awareness of togetherness and camaraderie. Susan sums this up by writing: "Everyone felt as if they belonged to this 'great big happy family'. It wasn't necessary to be introduced, we were and still are all Rhodesians" (Susan's diary, September 15, 1990). Thus, to speak of social memory is not so much an attestation about a resemblance or contiguity of a group's memories, but rather it bespeaks of a community of interests and thoughts, of the fact that the same group is interested in those same memories and is able to evoke them (Connerton 1989, 37).

Among this community, the desire to collect and compose a repertoire of common past in the form of reminiscences, anecdotes and stories of the early Rhodesian days seemed unquenchable. The following quote captures the significance of belonging to a community of memory by relating the sharing of memories to the bodily comfort a favorite piece of clothing provides:

Articles and anecdotes [of early Rhodesian days], such as we have enjoyed in the last few newsletters (...) remind us how life was lived in the Rhodesia that was. Their accounts give most of us something we can relate to and feel comfortable about, rather like putting on a favourite jacket (Kiggell 2000, 6).

Like many other diaspora communities, the ex- Rhodesian community of memory is thus very much involved in "retelling its story, its constitutive narrative" (Bellah et al 1985, 153; ref. Olick and Robbins 1998, 122). The arrival of the pioneer column as an origin narrative and a founding story of "us" is told and re-told over and again within the community. The

narrative form is that of a mythical origin story: The first people enter an “empty” land, cutting their way through virgin bush, facing and fighting danger, and gradually, because of their characteristic perseverance and stamina, building something out of nothing. Individual autobiographical experiences are interpreted and narrated according to this narrative. The memory of the founding persists over time. And over time the founding narrative like a magnet pulls meanings that pile upon its core. Thus, the origin narrative persists and unfolds in the Rhodesian community not merely by referring to the memory of the original event and its historical context, but by referring to the history of retelling and re-enacting the event (Olick and Robbins 1998, 130).

But although there is a widely shared comfortable agreement among the ex-Rhodesians about the significance of the arrival of the pioneer column as the founding moment of the Rhodesian society, not all narratives of the past are woven from the same comfortable fabric. The experienced events of more recent past evoke much more controversy, and their weaving in with the origin narrative in the Centenary scheme was challenged. Concurrently with the celebrations at Tshipise, the [Cape] Peninsula branch of the Rhodesian Association honored the founding more formally. They had begun the centenary year by introducing a commemorative medallion (in a special numbered and limited issue). The rest of the centenary program included a luncheon at Newlands Cricket Club and a commemorative service on the morning of 12th of September at the Rhodes Memorial in Rondebosch, where wreaths were laid. The highlight of the celebrations took place at the Castle of Good Hope, where “114 members and guests sat down to the banquet with all the traditional panoply befitting the venue – mess kit, medals and decorations, evening dresses, silver-laid candle-lit tables, a Highland piper, the Captain of the Castle, sentrie, escorts (with pikes) and waiters in the historic original uniforms of the Dutch East India Company” (Leach 1991, 18).

The marked difference is that the Cape celebrated the pioneer heritage by linking Rhodesian history explicitly with South African history, particularly that of the Cape. The program was distinctly formal: no stuffing oneself with *biltong* and *sadza* and beer here; no stuffing oneself into a pool with hundreds of others either. No sounds of troopie songs under stars, and definitely no sight of Ian Smith. Although the Rhodesianaland and the Cape centenary celebrations share the honoring of the key event, the honoring is carried out in contrasting ways; the episodes and elements of Rhodesian history they choose to emphasize are diverse. Thus, when I emphasize that memories are socially produced and that in the commemorative practices people remember together, I do not mean that they interpret those past experiences in unison. Shared is not same.

Vincent and Claudia, who otherwise actively took part in RASA functions, avoided going to big commemorations precisely because they had not and did not share the political views of Mr. Smith and his

Rhodesian Front party, and disliked the fact that very often such Rhodesian commemorations seemed to iconize Smith:

Vincent: To me they make too much fuss about Ian Smith and maybe that's why I don't wanna see Ian Smith. He's not my greatest friend (...) I've half read his book, which to me tells me he was a good, sincere man, but perhaps a little bit too naive when he was dealing with the British government.

Claudia: He had a lot of people behind him, totally anti-black.

Vincent: Yeah, and I'm pretty sure that maybe most of the Rhodesians would still be in that country if he had never declared UDI. I think it was a mistake. But you can't talk to a lot of these guys, you see, not even at the *braais* about that. It's still 'Good ol' Smithy', and you can tell when you walk into their houses, they've got Ian Smith's head on a copper plaque. (Vincent and Claudia)

Remembering – and forgetting – particularly within the official realm of public commemoration is powerfully charged and contested, Richard Werbner (1998b, 73-75) argues about postcolonial Zimbabwe. Public commemorations and state memorials underline who belongs to the nation and with what position in it. In the ex-Rhodesian community, there is widely shared respect for the honorable beginning of the country (although a few discordant voices may be heard about the legitimacy of the whole endeavor). However a much wider contestation concerning the interpretation of more recent, individually experienced past persists. Some narratives of the past are not comfortable jackets but itchy and tough and not lightly worn by everyone.

Pilgrimage site or tracing Rhodesia

When pilgrims gather to pay homage to their forebears it's usually at the fountainhead of their race. But what to do if your country has been lost? If you're a Rhodie, you simply create another (Blades, 1990).⁴³

Considering that *Rhodesiana* is a concept that refers to Rhodesian memorabilia – artifacts and things inscribed with categorical Rhodesian symbols, which are meant to evoke and embrace memories of Rhodesia – Rhodesianaland may be envisaged as an explicitly make-believe artifact-like realm for collective remembrance. If, in the everyday, memories of events, people or places may be evoked by quite arbitrary phenomena, in Rhodesianaland the awakening of memory was not entrusted to

⁴³ This was a caption to a full page report about the Centenary Celebrations in a major South African newspaper, The Sunday Times.

haphazard triggers. Instead, Rhodesianaland was imbued with clues and signs and traces reckoned to remind and call forth sharable memories. It was a temporary pilgrimage site secluded and withdrawn from the “real world,” especially constructed for a ritual period. Despite the make-believe, Rhodesianaland implied a “return”; the week of celebration was a nostalgia-journey, during which the participants traveled back to homeland.⁴⁴

The Centenary as a whole involved a great deal of both planned and spontaneous invention and improvisation. Most visibly this concerned the transformation of Tshipise into Rhodesianaland by creative place-making. Rhodesianaland was inscribed with clues meant to elicit memories that could be shared. The replacement of Tshipise signposts with street names of Salisbury; the imprinting of major stopovers of the Pioneer route on the dinner menu; the division of the *braai* area into named Rhodesian provinces all speak of the significance of embodying memory to particular locations. Moreover, the reciting of placenames – which is a recurring element in the Rhodesian discursive pattern – engenders the recollection of past places and experiences connected to those places. This recitation of an ordered sequence of placenames is called topogeny. According to James Fox, “In so far as a sequence of names can be attached to specific locations in an inhabited landscape, a topogeny represents a projected externalisation of memories that can be lived in as well and thought about” (1997, 8-9). Often the places that are noted in the landscape are those where some historically significant events have taken place (such as the locations on the pioneer path) or where otherwise culturally meaningful knowledge is stored (*ibid.*, 13; Armstrong 2004, 44).⁴⁵

The most significant feature of the recalled and recited placenames is their location in the past. The names used in Rhodesianaland were emphatically those of a past era and a past nation. They were of Rhodesia, not Zimbabwe. In some ways this eagerness for past placenames reminds me of the Apache in Keith Basso’s study. Basso rejects the view that placenames are merely vehicles of reference. “Placenames,” he argues, “are interpreted as highly charged cultural symbols that work to establish binding ties between Apache people and specific features of their geographical landscape whose manifold meanings give shape and substance to the present by infusing it with timeless verities rooted in the past” (1990, xvi).

⁴⁴ According to Nadia Seremetakis: “In Greek the verb *nostalgó* is a composite of *nostó* and *alghó*. *Nostó* means I return, I travel (back to homeland); (...). *Alghó* means I feel pain, I ache for and the noun *alghos* characterizes one’s pain in soul and body, burning pain (*kaimós*). Thus nostalgia is the desire or longing with burning pain to journey. It also evokes the sensory dimensions of memory in exile and estrangement” (1994, 4).

⁴⁵ On the significance of names and landscape in Southern Africa, see Gunner (1996) for a case of Sotho and Zulu oral poetry and McGregor (2005b) who discusses the attachment of ancestral memory to physical places, where in ritual performance ancestral names are recited.

The evocative power of placenames is most dramatically displayed when a name is used as a substitute for an entire saga or historical tale. Although the descriptive specificity of the Apache placenames is very different from the way Rhodesian places were named (often by some historically significant persons, some of whom had very little to do with Rhodesia), the relationship with names, now that the places they stood for are lost, is surprisingly similar. For the Apache, there are places that stalk. Basso's key informant explains:

Even if we go far away from here (...) places around here keep stalking us. If you live wrong, you will hear the names and see the places in your mind. They keep on stalking you, even if you go across oceans. The names of all these places are good. They make you remember how to live right, so you want to replace yourself again (ibid., 125).

In addition to the idea that placenames act as moral guides, the Apache employ placenames because they simply enjoy using them (Basso 1990, 108). For the ex-Rhodesians as well, pronouncing the past names aroused delight. Amongst themselves they seemed to talk names recurrently.⁴⁶ In the act of speaking the names, a person's relationship with the place is re-created and re-enforced. In speaking with names, the people come to represent a shared understanding of how they know themselves in relation to the past place (Basso 1988, 101). The ritual space of Rhodesianaland thus enabled the use of past names that are deemed incorrect outside in the "secular world." The recitation of names of the past awakens a once dwelled-in territory to which we-as-we-were belonged.

⁴⁶ On the Rhodesian Centenary album that Graham constantly played on his car stereo – and sang along with – was a song about a young couple traveling through Rhodesia in a car called *Salome*. The trick of the song is the sequential recitation of Rhodesian placenames. A fragment of the second verse will suffice to exemplify this: "[W]e had an urge to wander, down the old rough road to *Gwanda*, and onto *Essexvale* through *Balla Balla*. Drinking home-made brew in *Gwelo*, must admit I got mellow, in the morning I was sorry that I drank. Old *Salome* got some vuma, from *Que Que* to *Gatooma*, Jenny tipped the drags into her empty tank. We were rather broke in *Hartley*, so we had to leave quite smartly, in *Sinoya* got a loan and we were married. After that the hills were steeper, so we sailed from *Kariba* all the way to *Binga* on a ferry. That road from *Mlibize* to *Dett* wasn't easy and in-between there weren't many bars. Old *Salome* got quite cranky as we toured the park at *Wankie*, and it's not a place to sleep beneath the stars" ("Salome, Jennifer and Me" in Edmond 1990.) Most places mentioned in the song have been renamed since independence, some simply given new transliterations. For example, *Essexvale* – *Esigodini*; *Gwelo* – *Gweru*; *Que Que* – *Kwekwe*; *Hartley* – *Chegututu*; *Sinoya* – *Chinoyi*; *Wankie* – *Hwange*, and so forth. (http://www.sciencedaily.com/encyclopedia/place_names_in_zimbabwe).

Besides placenames, natural elements at the site also called forth recollection. The landscape of Tshipise was very suitable in suggesting natural similarities that triggered spatial memories. Marjorie noted that the final stretch of their arduous journey was spent “picking out familiar landmarks.” The baobabs, the *mopane* scrub, the rocky hills, the red dusty roads, the winter-white *veld* of tall grass are repeatedly recognized and noted in the descriptive accounts of the Centenary. Yet, there is a certain nondescriptness or emptiness about Tshipise in the accounts of it. This “emptiness” seemed to generate imagination and improvisation; it seemed to enable the place to stand for another. Somehow, the location was not decisive. The imagined Rhodesianaland lacked a direct connection with the land; it could have taken its place anywhere. It also lacked a direct connection to the events and places inscribed upon it. This arbitrariness allowed for both recognition and fabrication. Don Handelman (1990, 42) notes, referring to a study by Mona Ozouf (1975), that in public festivals celebrating the French Revolution there was a strict matrix of space. Space used for such occasions should be universal (not overly known about), arbitrary (and thus unconnected to the past), empty (thereby open to innovation), illuminated and in the open air without fragmentation. Within such an open space, allegorical allusions of the occasions could carry complex messages.

Rhodesianaland was a memory-land, the geography of which was formed by traces of Rhodesia. Had the natural landscape been more unlike Rhodesia, similarities would still have been recognized. Juan Campo discusses American pilgrimage landscapes and describes Mount Rushmore, a memorial site not hallowed by the shedding of blood, nor located to any particular event or climatic time in history. Campo (1998, 49) calls Mount Rushmore “its own event.” Rhodesianaland, by contrast, may be seen as “its own landscape” performed and produced through the events of reunion and reenactment. In this imaginatively constructed site, elements in the natural landscape are recognized in so far as they resemble and remind; as long as they are reminiscent enough of the landscape of the past. Memory is very significantly anchored in places, but here the places are traces or reflections of the actual physical experienced place. The actual places where memories are embedded are transported through acts of recognizing sameness and in acts of re-enactment with the places where sameness is recognized. This recognition is explicit; it is made a point of. Analogously with the diasporic home, it is the almostness of landscape which is recognized. By walking through the imaginative landscape of Rhodesianaland, the participants meandered through familiar landmarks in the form of placenames and natural features. These landmarks acted as triggers or codes to recollections that could be communicated and shared with other ramblers.

Naming the site Rhodesianaland and the site’s roads with Salisbury street names, decorating the site with Rhodesian flags, re-enacting

significant moments in Rhodesian history on this memory site, are all acts of representation. They are acts of representation understood as *re*-presentation, as causing to reappear that which has disappeared (Connerton 1989, 69). This accentuation of continuity with historic past, the conjuncture of past and present in a physical place in the form of transportation of places and events was done playfully. The continuity of the core event was embellished with novel, improvised elements. Thus, the Centenary was a mixture of the established and the capricious, of repeated and recombined elements.

Re-enactment

Commemorative ceremonies, Paul Connerton (1988, 61) writes, may be distinguished from other rituals by the fact that they refer explicitly to historical, prototypical actors or events. In a commemorative ceremony the community is reminded of its common identity as told in its master narrative. Commemorative ceremonies are re-enactments of the past, where the past returns in a “representational guise which normally includes a simulacrum or the scene or situation recaptured” (*ibid.*, 72). The power of the ceremony is further enhanced because the re-enactment takes place on the anniversary day itself, at the calendric conjuncture of past and present (Jarman 2001, 172). Thus, in the commemorations of founding a nation, memory is anchored around specific sites and key symbolic dates. The significance of a founding moment – as the beginning of a nation – is the primary day designated for remembrance in many nation-states (e.g., Spillman 1997; Handelman, 1990; Johnson 2002). The verbalizable side of remembering is but one facet of the commemoration. Although memory does need to be articulated in order to be social, the articulation or communication is not necessarily worded (e.g., Connerton 1989; Fentress and Wicham 1992, 47). In addition to reading and writing, telling and listening, the origin narrative is also repeatedly represented by physical enactment. According to Connerton (1989, 4-5) the social formation of memory rests on particular types of repetition, namely commemorative ceremonies and bodily practices. He stresses that although these are not the only constituents of social memory, a focus on such performative or embodied aspects of memory leads us to see that images and recollected knowledge of the past are essentially conveyed and sustained by (more or less) ritual performances (*ibid.*, 40). Therefore, in addition to the re-telling, re-reading and re-hearing about the founding event (and the events, trials and tribulations to which it led), it persists in the social memory as a memory of re-enactments and of bodily incorporation.

During the Centenary celebrations, the individual bodily participation in ritual acts was what made the commemoration particularly persuasive and emotionally evocative for the participants. Neither Susan nor Marjorie wrote much about the factual topic or content of the Centenary – the

historical event of the pioneers' arrival – in their diaries. Instead, they described at length traveling to the location, their movements within Rhodesianaland, their discussions with people they met, their meals, their dressing up for the special events. In short, the Centenary celebrations became known to them through their phenomenal experiencing of the location and the events. The corporeal experiencing is tied to the emotional and cognitive memorability of an event. Don Handelman notes that it is emblematic of public events – such as commemorative ceremonies – in modern Western nation-states to be “obsessed with the feeling-states of the participants, with expressiveness, and so with the capacity of an event to affect” (1990, 277). In the schema of the Centenary, the intent was to create a “memorable occasion.” In this context, a memorable occasion is precisely such; it is an event designed to evoke sentiment and arouse emotion via individual bodily participation.

Juan Eduardo Campo analyzes how the Gettysburg Civil War battlefield in Pennsylvania was gradually transformed into a pilgrimage site between the actual event in 1863 and the centennial ceremony held in 1963. This was accomplished through acts of “commemoration, monumentation, reunion and re-enactment” (1998, 48; see also Archibald 2002, 76). In the early days Civil War veterans gathered to the battlefield for recollecting their experiences through re-enacting key moments of the battle. But even with the passing of the last veterans, the site has continued to attract new generations of visitors, some of whom began to re-enact the critical scenes with careful attention to detail. At the centenary celebration:

[A] crowd of about 40 000 watched as a group of 1000 men dressed as Union and Confederate soldiers staged the culminating engagement of the battle – a performance that ended with their joining together to sing the national anthem (Linenthal 1991, 99; ref. Campo 1998, 49).

The Rhodesianaland re-enactment of the flag hoisting ceremony shared many similarities with the Gettysburg performance. The attention to historical detail was carefully observed. The costumes were tailored as exact replicas; the flagpole was a simulacrum of the original. The timing of the event was also precise: the event was scheduled to begin at exactly 100 years to the minute after the original ceremony. The sequence of events, with the six men entering the scene, the giving of prayer, the sounding of the trumpet, the raising of the flag and the gun salute attempted to replicate the original event. The prayer was a verbatim reproduction of the original: its fateful present-tense phrases promising a new beginning in a new land. But like the Gettysburg one, the Rhodesianaland re-enactment was a tableau performed to live spectators and to filming cameras. In the flag-raising ceremony there was a commentator who explained the course of events as they were unfolding to the audience. In both events, the performance ended in the spectators joining the act. The Gettysburg

crowd came together in singing the national anthem. Summoned by the commentator the Rhodesianaland assembly joined in three cheers for Queen Victoria. But so caught up was the audience with the ceremony that unwritten and unrehearsed they spontaneously rose to their feet while cheering.

Thus, the mnemonic power of commemoration rests on the fact that primal events – culturally meaningful experiences – are bodily re-enacted; the participants give the rite a ceremonially embodied form. Connerton (1989, 41-43) observes how the Third Reich constantly reminded the people of the party and its ideology by a series of commemorations, the sequence and performative structure of which was soon canonized. Thus, in rites the bodily poses, gestures and movements are prescribed. The participants have knowledge, experience and expectation about the forms and sequences of ritual language and bodily gestures, which makes the ceremonial procedure both emotional and mnemonically effective. Such habitual memory connected to performance is one example of how memory gets passed-on in non-textual and non-cognitive ways (*ibid.*, 102-103).

The performativeness of ritual also relies on utterances used, particularly on the characteristic use of personal pronouns, namely the “we.” “In pronouncing the ‘we’ the participants meet not only in an externally definable space but in a kind of ideal space determined by their speech acts (...) performative utterances are the place in which the community is constituted and recalls to itself the fact of its constitution” (Connerton 1989, 59). In the flag-raising tableau, the words of the prayer were the only spoken utterances (the commentator’s voice excepting) inherent in the ritual. “Here we stand on new soil, in a new country, with new hopes, new opportunities and new challenges,” the prayer begins. Here the “we” is firstly “we the pioneers” set in a definite historical beginning of “us,” at a moment of founding. The founding insinuates that something is set up, created, established and initiated for the first time; something that thenceforward continues to exist through perpetual maintenance (Oxford English Dictionary 2007). Hence, the “we” is set standing on “newly established soil,” in a “newly created country” with a duty to conserve, control and cultivate the God-given newly created land “and to give it our best even as we gave our homelands our best.”

But the “we” of the prayer ceremonially performed is also the “we” who are present at this very moment honoring and remembering the pioneer ancestors, with whom a direct connection is formed through this memory performance. The founders become the ancestors of all of “us” present in the ceremony. This direct genealogy is ritually maintained in insisting that the flag should always be raised by a direct descendant of the original pioneers. Thus, commemoration is integrally linked to ceremonies of the body. Connerton indicates that noble privileges in a society of “orders” and “estates” are ceremonially attached to ancestors, whose merits and achievements are considered to have endured in the blood: “My lineage,

my branch, my name, my coat of arms, refer to qualities inherent in the possessor, expressing those qualities in idealized form; they allude in etherealized manner to something that is distinctly and directly corporeal: blood" (1989, 86). The blood-relative performing the ritual act further enhances the authenticity of the ceremony. In the accounts of the flag-raising tableau, Hal Pennefather's likeness to his great-uncle, Lt-Col Edward Pennefather, was emphasized: "Like his forebear, he stands six feet and six inches tall" (Morgan 1991, 16). In his body and posture he stood for and bestowed the event with a direct continuity of past and present.

In the ceremony of re-enactment, each participant relives the experience of the ancestors and thereby links him/herself to the chain of generations. The re-enactment of the founding moment – an event which is beyond autobiographical or experiential memory of any of the participants in the ceremony – has to do with repetition and return of experience. But it is a question of return and repetition of an experience no individual present has intimate knowledge of. How then is it possible to "remember" the past of the ancestors? Maurice Bloch shows how the Zafimaniry of Madagascar frequently visit historical sites where some culturally significant events have taken place. These visits may make the descendants of those who took part in the original event re-experience what happened to their ancestors and thus "remember" the distant past as if it were their own (1998, 115). The same can be said to happen in a commemorative ceremony. Indeed, Jeffrey Olick and Joyce Robins (1998, 123) argue that much of what we remember, we did not individually experience. They quote Eviatar Zerubavel (1996) who writes: "[B]eing social presupposes the ability to experience events that happened to groups and communities to which we belong long before we joined them as if they were part of our own past." Through this "sociobiographical memory," Olick and Robins write, we are able to feel pride, pain or shame in regard to events that happened to groups we belong to before we joined them. In the re-enactment, the participants thus *return* to an experience of their forebears through ritual performance. Thus, the "we" of the present becomes one with the "we" of the past. If we take "we" to include the people that a group shares the phenomenal, experiential world with, in this instance it is the idea of the experiential world which is extended rather than the comprehensiveness of the group. The temporal distance is stitched up: "we" are one with the ancestors.

And yet, in Rhodesianaland the re-enactment of the beginning of the community takes place in an imaginary memory-land, after the nation thus founded has ceased to exist and the community has been dispersed worldwide. Through the commemoration they have called to remembrance their constitution as a community. The commemoration is a reflexive cultural performance through which the participants become conscious of how they see themselves. "At once actor and audience, we may then come into the fullness of our human capability – and perhaps human desire – to watch ourselves and enjoy knowing that we know" (Myerhoff 1980, 7; ref

Turner 1988, 42). This reflexivity includes the acknowledgement that the enormous confidence and certainty expressed in the founding did not assure an immortal endurance and permanence of the world-as-we-knew-it. This acknowledgment seemed not, however, to weaken the power of the re-enactment. Instead, the hindsight appeared to intensify the multiplicity of emotions – pride, respect, pain, disappointment, and longing – that dynamized the event. The bittersweet pathos cracking the voices that joined together in singing “Rhodesians never die,” the spontaneous thrill and excitement that surged over the audience at the re-enactment while they were listening to the founding words of the prayer expressed a deep involvement of the participants in the event. It is this involvement, which makes the event into a repetition with difference, and which makes the event socially memorable.

Conclusion

In this section I have discussed two culturally specific memory practices and significant memory sites of the community. In the first example I analyzed the *bring and braai* as a repeatedly occurring social food event, a key realm of memory in the community. As a form of remembering together, the *bring and braai* is characterized by metonymical relationships between food occasions. Thus, the tasting of food associated with home recalls the whole structure of the past society to which it belonged. Thereby the event is vertically connected to food events at home in the past. The horizontal aspect lies in the connection *braaing* brings about between the disparate ex-Rhodesian communities worldwide; between those who commemoratively *braai* around the globe and are, in so doing, bound together in remembering Rhodesia. The *bring and braai* is thus a mnemonic practice through which a community that remembers together is made and molded. I have emphasized how food has a particular ability to carry and structure meanings and memories. Through multisensory experience food and the repeated ritual food events enable the consumers to re-call the past, sense a connection to it and hold it in the present side by side with others, who also care for the perpetuation of this bond. In the diaspora context, however, distinguishable alterations restructure the festive food event: the meal that commemorates the continuity of “us” is not the most typical “we” used to share at home. Rather than an occasion for the circulation of hospitality, the *bring and braai* celebrates other values significant for the creation of a moral community; friendship, solidarity and lack of hierarchy.

The second example, the celebration of the centenary, can be considered as a repetition of key themes central in the pioneer narrative of conquest, of marking and making a new place. Significantly, the re-enactment of the founding moment involved the fabulation of an empty land. In Section II, I have analyzed how the solidification of the traveler’s story into the pioneer

origin story involved the shifting of natural features, as well as any traces of human involvement in the landscape, to the background; it entailed the narrative creation of a blank space in which the core action – “the opening up of the country” – could be played out. In the centenary re-enactment, the participants created an “empty space” out of Tshipise. The virtually total absence of black people as significant actors in the centenary events re-enforced the moral core of the origin myth. The re-enactment was, therefore, not so much about the reproduction of the original event as it was about the reproduction of a myth, underlying and constituting the whole colonial endeavor.

The embodied ritual participation of the commemorators in the founding offered the participants a chance to integrate their individual biography to the socially shared origin narrative and thus to re-establish a sense of belonging to “us” and to the homeland. As I have shown, the mnemonic power and emotional affectivity of commemoration rests on this individual bodily participation. In the re-enactment the participants, through ritual performance, “return” to the experience of their ancestors. In commemorating and thus in calling to remembrance the constitution of the community, continuity is formed through ceremony; a continuity, however, which when extended to new contexts involves improvisation and re-creation.

CONCLUSION

This ethnography has pursued to capture the many ways in which the colonial past effects and affects in the contemporary lives of former Rhodesians owing to their concerted efforts to actively hold it close. I have examined how the ex-Rhodesians' ideas and practices regarding place and home and their common past are shaped and structured in diaspora. The Rhodesia that does not exist anymore is adhered to in the here and now through conversations and recollections, in written recitals and sketches of the past as well as in more elaborate memoirs, in communal gatherings, social re-enactments and material displays. Such social memory practices, I have suggested, are fundamental to how the community understands itself. Hence, the diaspora community's sense of belonging is grounded on shared reminiscing and on diverse memory practices, the intensive and inventive circulation of which builds individual experiences in and of the past into stories of us.

Thus, a significant question I have addressed here concerns how individual experiences in the past and the subsequent remembering of them are linked with and built into intensely transmitted cultural representations. In remembering together, people attach their personal versions and interpretations of the past to such representations, in the process of which the individual inputs both shape and are shaped by culturally meaningful scripts. I have suggested that the diasporic dispersal and displacement effectively induce the active search for and the emphasis on common, sharable experience, obscuring and pushing aside obvious distinctions and disparities in the lived-in past. The concomitant discourse about "our past" is projected outwards; it becomes constitutive in building the dispersed, potential community. The diasporic story of a shared past thereby continuously processed is open enough to embrace distinct versions and inputs to its bulk, each participant's hold on the "whole" affecting in its singular way the shape and form of this discourse. The openness means that such discourse tends to be repetitive and somewhat general, often devoid of excessive personal detail. However, the dynamism of the storytelling lies in the fact that it is still grounded in and powered by phenomenal experiences of the bygone world itself. The representation and reconstruction of the past rest on the experience of there and then; it is the largely the underlying, unverbalizable knowledge of the past world's minute components and designs, which make these stories reverberate so vigorously in people's lives, and which makes possible the perpetual circulation of the past in stories.

Consequently, I have stressed that despite the incessant discussion of "our past" and of its objectified upholding, the past is present not only through talk. I have sought to examine other spheres or levels of remembering together, which have more to do with being within the past, of embodying the past, rather than just talking about it. For

example, when the ex-Rhodesians speak about the bush, the phenomenal experience of it cannot be directly conveyed to an outsider. Thus the experience is represented by a specific landscape talk inclusive of cultural dichotomizations and categorizations. These levels of knowledge – the experience of the native world and its learned reconstruction as Bourdieu (1977, 18) defines them, and which are pertinent to each and every ethnographic examination – are quite apparent in regard to remembering place. In this representation, particular known, named and familiar places are disclosed through cultural reconstructions of place, such as they are familiarized in outsider-oriented discourse. In *Whenwe*-reminiscing, the participants share knowledge of both of these levels: the corporeal experience and its repeated reconstruction in representation. However, the phenomenal experience – and the silences and gaps it includes – on which knowledge of place is grounded, is not erased from the representations, although the place-talk as such might be un-detailed and even sterile. Knowledge of place is gained through bodily engagement with it; it is the interlacing of such individual experience with the knowledge of the cultural categorizations and representations attached to the places which make them socially sharable. I have pursued to show how places and their stories may operate as mnemonic devices to recall a shared history and to act as moral guides. With narratives, some elements and locations in the physical milieu are made meaningful, explanatory of how “we” are woven into a relationship with the surrounding world. Canonical narration, transportation of places in stories and in the form of mementos spell out the immense significance laid on place in diaspora.

Thus, although memories need to be articulated for them to be social, the articulation need not be realized only in language. Another way of remembering Rhodesia and of building sharable memories is the transportation of homeland in the form of objects and artifacts from the “proper home.” I have analyzed how the everyday domestic *homethings* condense spatial, temporal and emotional aspects of home and suggested that it is through such familiar things that a sense of home may be communicated to oneself and to others. The past is carried in things from home, which when reassembled and displayed in the diaspora settings have the ability to metonymically call forth and act as physical reminders of the past wholes of which they once were part. Such objects concretize continuity in spite of diasporic mobility; in reminding they communicate a sense of home. The displays of memorabilia objects in what I have labeled as Rhodesian altars are quintessential reminders, collections of objects that are specifically designed in order to help one remember. The memorabilia displayed in the Rhodesian altars are objects that are not as such connected to individual life-history; they are first and foremost national symbols. These are easily sharable elements that form replicated patterns from one home to another. Compiled into displays they scheme a visual memory genre well suited to social circulation. Thus, although

the mnemonic mode of reminding may be considered as more passive and individual than that of reminiscing, the reminders belong to a cultural scheme of things; they invoke like associations, ideas and memories.

Food and food practices from home have the same adeptness for triggering memories. Each social food event metonymically recalls the elementary structure of other like meals, thus the relation between commemorative food events comprises a system of repeated analogies. Sharing food from home substantiates ties to the homeland as well as to the dispersed community, expressing an idea of returning to the whole in the face of fragmentation. The wholeness or fullness that consuming memory food evokes is tied to the fact that in the act of eating food from home while in exile, the consumers attach themselves to a potential, thinkable community of others, who are eating that same food. One may express and experience belonging in the diaspora community through repeated participation in such social meals. Although the acts of tasting and the memories that familiar tastes evoke are obviously individually experienced, the tasting of home is simultaneously a deeply socially cementing experience, connected to moral gestures, such as hospitality, friendliness and generosity. I have indicated that as a diasporic social form the *bring and braai* food event compromises moral values connected to food generosity back home in Rhodesia. However, the *bring and braai* stresses alternative but likewise highly regarded moral values. It operates as a tactful leveler of social and economic inequalities; it may be seen as an expression of solidarity and sameness.

Commemoration as a mnemonic practice comprises multiple intertwined modes of social remembering. The expressed objective in the ritual celebration of the Centenary of Rhodesia was the creation of a specific ceremonial site in which people could come together to recall and reflect upon their common past – to uphold that past by retelling the community's master narrative. But the emotional and evocative power of commemoration does not rest solely upon verbal means such as reminiscing or the canonical re-telling of the origin story. As a memory site, Rhodesianaland was packed and furnished with signs and traces of Rhodesia that would certainly evoke memories in the perceivers meandering in their midst. Playing with names and stressing similarities in the natural milieu served as reminders of coveted past places. Those places were transported into Rhodesianaland by imaginative re-presentation, in which the past was fashioned to vivaciously reappear. Returning to the experience of the ancestors through ritual performance was at the core of the commemorative ceremony. Individual bodily involvement in the re-enactment made the occasion compelling and moving and thus memorable. Re-living the experience of ancestors in ceremony united the participants in a profound sense, for it spelled out their shared origin and thus their constitution as a community in the past as well as in the present.

The improvisation and re-creation built in the ceremony made the event into a repetition with difference. I have stressed that the reproduced is never a mirror image of the original, neither of the original place or event, nor of past commemorative occasions. The gaps and respites of memory as well as the always unique input and interpretation of participant actors allow for new forms to be woven in the commemorative structure, and hence social forms are re-created anew and afresh. By examining such diverse ways of remembering integral to the commemorative event I have wanted to emphasize how meanings in compelling and sententious ways emerge in specific practices. Such practices in implicit ways carry phenomenal experiences of the place past; it is through such practices that people not only actively re-enter the no-longer lived worlds, but those worlds re-enter the present practices of the people.

The impelling search for the past – remembering to remember – contains a bittersweet wistfulness to hold the past close and return to it through various mnemonic practices. Yet the wistfulness also encompasses a realization that the past is irrevocably over and done with, and significantly, that it cannot as such be unmade or remade in order to functionally serve present needs. But the question here is not of any nostalgic homesickness for a place past; the wistfulness regards the end of an era. In this work, I have pursued to give ethnographic depth to broad and often rather loosely applied notions and conceptualizations such as diaspora, and the colonial, from the perspective of a community in a markedly privileged position. Although the emphasis on homeland, on common origins, and on the maintenance of the dispersed community is pivotal for diasporic communities in general, it is clear that the ex-Rhodesian experience of dispersal is radically different from groups of people who have not shared their advantaged position. I believe that this ethnographically grounded focus will help us to gain deeper understanding of the heterogeneity of experience that diaspora comprehends. I have also endeavored to examine the specific ways in which the colonial past unfolds and is made sense of from the perspective of former colonials. I have sought to make sense of the culturally particular ways in which ideas and practices related for example to place and home can be regarded as colonial constructions, stressing the variety and diversity within the cultural category of the colonial. A variety, as I have pointed out, that tends to be somewhat leveled down and soothed in diaspora.

Colonial Rhodesia is remembered in a definite post-position: Rhodesia is finished and the people are removed from it spatially and temporally. This ultimate ending and posterior locus allow for a savoring of the past pertaining to this community: changes in the Zimbabwean society have not grown on the people, and the people have not grown with them. This is reflected in an intrinsic inarticulatedness, at times unnerving and disturbing, when it comes to the way the ex-Rhodesians reflect upon and understand their privileged position in the colonial society. Although

issues and ideas that form the nucleus of the ex-Rhodesians' memories have been enabled by and created within a colonial social structure and by the settlers' position within that structure, this position was seldom explicitly scrutinized or explored as such; it rarely entered reflexive self-consciousness. However, in addition to the posterior position in relation to the remembered place and era, this inaudible presence of an underlying colonial ambiguity grounding the ex-Rhodesian belonging did seem to perpetuate the on-going obsession with the past. This work has pursued to show how it is conveyed in the explicit passion to affirm and re-affirm their past, to meander in memories and to tell a story of "Rhodesians that were," so that "we" would not be forgotten.

APPENDIX 1: Population statistics

A) Rhodesia

Table 3: Population in Rhodesia

YEAR	EUROPEAN POPULATION
1891	1500
1896	5000
1904	12 680
1911	23 730
1921	33 780
1931	50 070
1941	69 370
1951	136 000
1969	228 296
1979	232 000

Sources: Estimates for 1891 and 1896: Kirkwood 1984, 146 and Palmer 1977b, 12; for 1904-1931: Southern Rhodesia Official Yearbook 1952, cit. Kennedy 1987, 197; 1941-1951: Southern Rhodesian Annual Report 1952; 1969-1979: Godwin and Hancock 1993.

The first official census, which covered only the European population, was conducted in 1904. The population figures prior to that are estimates. First full census on the African population was made in 1962. It is estimated that the total population of Rhodesia in 1910 was 880 000; in 1950 2 730 000; in 1970 5 310 000 and in 1979 7 130 000 (Republic of Zimbabwe. CSO. Quarterly Digest of Statistics 1990).

Table 4: Recorded Emigration from Rhodesia/Zimbabwe

YEAR	EMIGRANTS
1970	5 238
1971	4 713
1972	4 562
1973	6 846
1974	7 982
1975	9 242
1976	13 013
1977	14 556
1978	16 467
1979	12 951
1980	17 240
1981	20 534
1982	17 942
1983	19 067
1984	16 979
1985	6 918
1986	3 787
1987	5 330
1988	4 305
1989	4 565

Source: Republic of Zimbabwe. CSO. Quarterly Digest of Statistics, Dec 1990. Table 2: Recorded Migration through Official Ports.

The figures in the table do not give an accurate record of actual emigration, since it only recognizes migration through official ports, and not all emigrants declared that they were leaving permanently. African emigration through official ports has been recorded since April 1978.

B) Ex-Rhodesians in South Africa

Table 5: Present Location of RASA Members in South Africa

LOCATION	PERCENTAGE
Gauteng	38,4
KwaZulu Natal	31,5
Western Cape	10,1
Eastern Cape	7,4
Mpumalanga	5,4
Northwest Province	4,4
Limpopo, Free State and Northern Cape Provinces	2,8
Total	100

Source: Flame Lily Foundation 2003: Membership Survey 2002 Analysis

Since the Cape Province has founded a separate Rhodesian association, the membership in RASA has plummeted. In 1992, ten years before the above survey, 33 % of RASA members lived in the Cape Province (Flame Lily Foundation/RASA survey 1993).

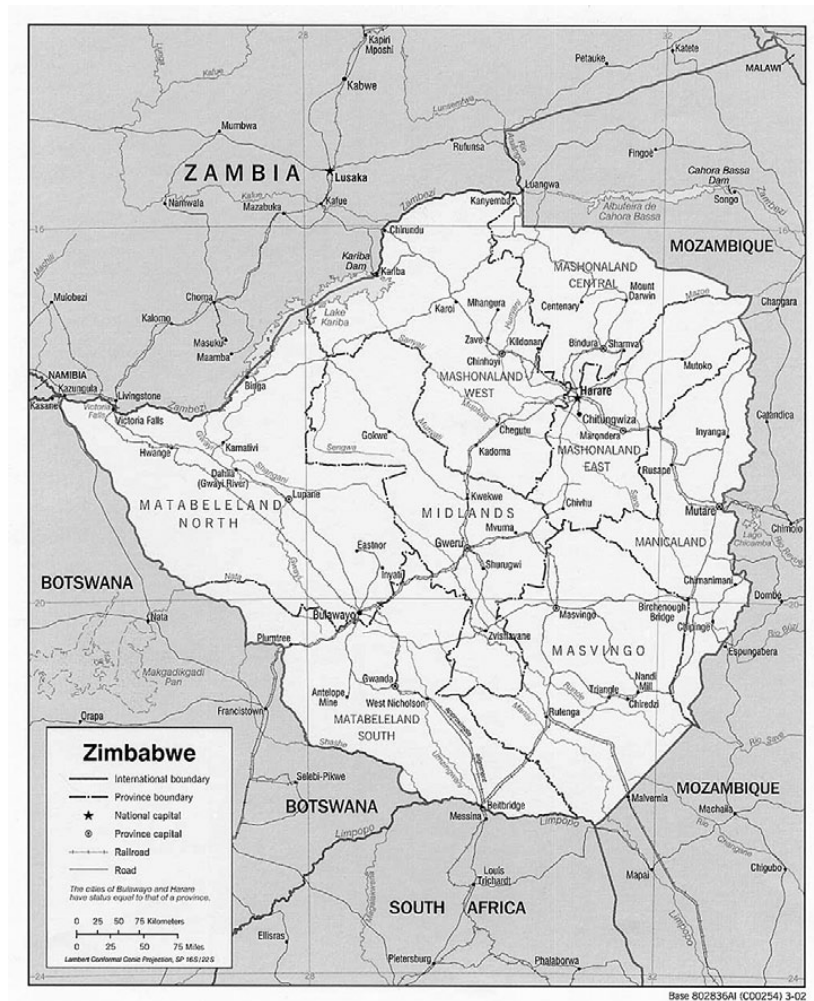
Table 6: Ex-Rhodesians in South Africa in Percentage by Place of Birth

COUNTRY	INFORMANTS IN THIS STUDY	RASA MEMBERS NATIONWIDE
Rhodesia	56,9	35,5
UK	23,5	24
South Africa	17,6	31,2
Elsewhere	2	9,5
Total	100	100

Source: Field data

APPENDIX 2: Maps

Map 1: Zimbabwe



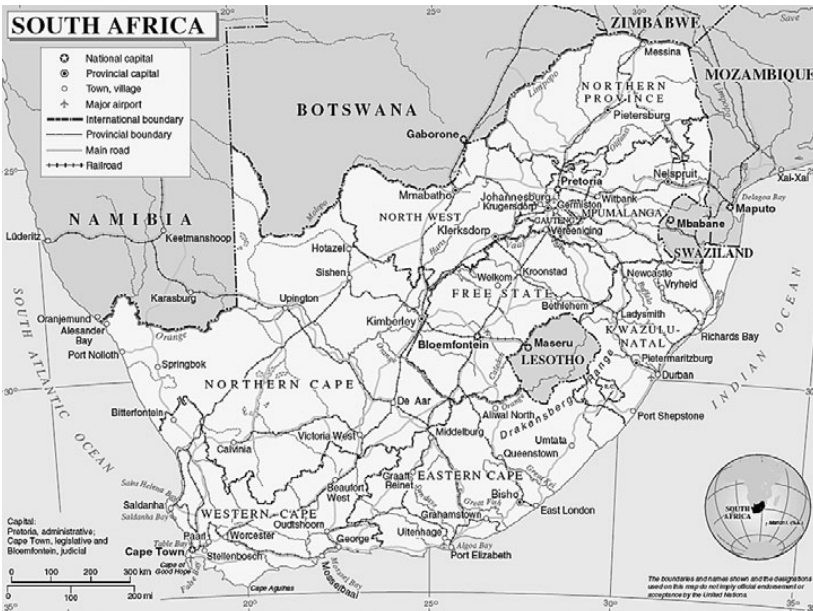
Source: <http://www.iss.co.za/Af/maps/zimbabwe.jpg>

Map 2: Southern Africa



Source: https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/reference_maps/pdf/africa.pdf

Map 3: South Africa (Provinces)



Source: <http://www.ohchr.org/english/countries/maps/southafr.pdf>

GLOSSARY

<i>Bakkie</i>	(SA) A small pick-up with an open cargo area.
<i>Biltong</i>	(Afrikaans) Spiced and dried meat, mainly of game, beef or ostrich.
<i>Bobotie</i>	(Afrikaans) A Cape Malay dish made of minced meat (usually beef or lamb), curry, dried fruit, with a custard topping.
<i>Boerewors</i>	(Afrikaans) a spicy sausage. Literally a farmers' (<i>boere</i>) sausage (<i>wors</i>).
<i>Braai</i>	(Afrikaans) abbr. <i>braaivleis</i> . 1. (n.) roasted meat; 2. (v.) to roast meat; 3. (n.) a barbeque.
<i>Bundu</i>	(South African English) a wilderness region, remote from cities. Derives from a shona word <i>bundo</i> , i.e., growing grass, thick growth of plants or shrubs.
<i>Koeksusters</i>	(Afrikaans) Originally a Cape Malay dish, made of plaited dough, which is deep-fried and then dipped into sweet lemon and ginger spiced syrup.
<i>Kopje</i>	(Afrikaans) A small hill, knob or ridge that rises from the surrounding plain. These granite boulders are technically known as inselbergs.
<i>Laager</i>	(Afrikaans) Originally referred to a formation used by the pioneers during treks, whereby wagons would be placed in a circle with cattle and horses in the middle to protect them from wild animals and raiders.
<i>Melktert</i>	(Afrikaans) A custard tart spiced with vanilla and cinnamon.
<i>Mielie</i>	(Afrikaans) Maize or corn on cob. Also mealie.
<i>Msasa</i>	(<i>Brachystegia spiciformis</i>) A small, shrubby flat-trop tree, which grows in savanna forests of Southern and Eastern Africa.
<i>Mopane</i>	(<i>Colophospermum mopane</i>) A tree that grows in hot, dry and low-lying areas of northern parts of Southern Africa.
<i>Mukwa</i>	(<i>Pterocarpus angolensis</i>) A tree native to Southern Africa. The durable hardwood, also known as wild teak or Rhodesian teak, has a light brownish-yellow color, and it is used for furniture and curios.

- Oke* (South African slang, an “Afrikanerism”) A guy, bloke or chap.
- Sadza* (Shona) A staple food in Zimbabwe made of white mealie-meal and water.
- Sosaties* (Afrikaans) Skewers of meat, onions and dried fruit marinated in curry sauce.
- Ugali* (Swahili) An Eastern African staple food generally made of mealie-meal and water, equivalent to *sadza* in Zimbabwe and *pap* in South Africa.
- Veld* (Afrikaans) Literally a field. However, it generally refers to the wide open rural landscapes of grass or low scrub of Southern Africa.
- Veldskoen* (Afrikaans) Plural veldskoene, affectionately known as *vellies*. Literally field shoes. Originally made of untanned hide. Now used for ankle-length boots made of soft but strong leather or suede.

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